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Under the North Star:
Canadian National Identity in School Readers

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Abstract

Under the North Star: Canadian national identity in school readers

This thesis examines constructions of English Canadian national identity in school readers approved for use in Grades Four to Six in Ontario Public Schools from 1909 to 1970, schoolbooks used throughout English-speaking Canada during the mid-twentieth century. While the lavishly illustrated readers comprise collections of prose, poetry and exposition designed to improve reading comprehension, the accompanying Teachers' Guides reveal the editors' intentions to reinforce Canadian identity through the creation of a common cultural heritage and values based upon a British settler past.

The emerging metanarratives of wilderness and multiculturalism mark the shift from a concerted British colonial identity in the early twentieth century to a distinctly Canadian identity after World War II. Wilderness is constituted as the site for the construction of this uniquely Canadian identity, not only through brave pioneer ancestors creating homes but also as the location for contemporary adventures and encounters with Aboriginal Others.

The readers were children's first official introduction to Canada, effectively children's handbooks for Canadian citizenship, modelling their duties and responsibilities as 'young Canadians.' Children imagined their nation, not only by taking part in the communal ritual of reading in the classroom but also through virtual tours of Canada, visiting other children 'from sea to sea'.

The thesis establishes school readers as a valuable but neglected resource in discussions of the development of Canadian national identity, revealing largely unresolved tensions between traditional antimodern values and occupations and the realities of twentieth-century Canada urban industrial society.

Key words – Canada, national identity, antimodern, schoolbooks

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Preface

I have been collecting old school textbooks since I could read, initially as extra material to feed my voracious reading habit, later as part of a wider interest in historical educational materials. My childhood collection included my mother and my grandmother's old textbooks and others acquired from jumble sales and it was fascinating to see how children of earlier generations learned, especially through their school readers.

Not long ago in a second-hand shop I came across the *Teachers [sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*.¹ *Wide Open Windows* was the reader I used in Grade Five and I was very curious to see what the teachers' manual might hold—those manuals were always kept out-of-reach of pupils and we assumed they held many secrets, including the 'right' answers to the weekly tests.² From amid the technical chapters on 'Defining the Post-

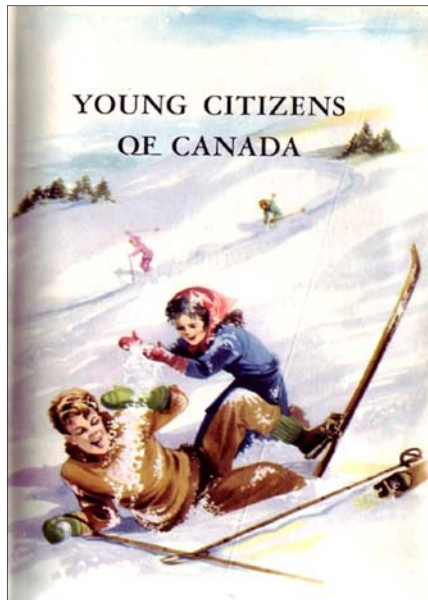


Figure 0.1 *Wide Open Windows*

Primary Reading Problem', charts showing the 'Distribution of Reading Skills and Abilities' and detailed 'Lesson Plans' which, yes, included the 'right answers', the following paragraph popped out:

The book must be Canadian as a whole. Great pains have been taken to inform the pupil of Canadian culture and Canadian achievement to the end that he may develop an admiration of, and affection for, Canada as his homeland.³

Who would have suspected that while 'Developing Silent Reading Skills and Abilities' we were also being transformed into 'Young Citizens of Canada'? A closer examination of my newly acquired teachers' manual and the readers in my collection confirmed my suspicions that there was more to the

readers than simply short stories about pioneers clearing forests or brave children building igloos in the Arctic. The readers provided Canadian children with our earliest ideas about 'Canada' several years before we were formally introduced to History, Geography and Civics, especially in the decades before widespread television formed our impressions of our country

¹ Franklin L. Barrett, ed. *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*, Canadian Reading Development Series (Toronto: Copp Clark Co. Limited, 1948).

² F.L. Barrett, ed. *Wide Open Windows* (Vancouver: Copp Clark, 1947).

³ Barrett, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*.p.xv.

and its people. The Canada depicted in the readers represents the views and values of the people in authority in each era, the educators and cultural leaders, and the government bureaucrats responsible for the design and implementation of curriculum, effectively they present an ‘official version’ of Canada.

A traditional means of instruction since the early nineteenth century, school readers were discontinued in the early 1970s, as new pedagogical methods replaced ‘reading’ with ‘language arts’ and a variety of new educational media including television were introduced in the classroom. Perhaps more importantly, the emphasis shifted from ‘traditional values’ to preparing children ‘to cope with the accelerated rate of social change expected in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.’⁴

At approximately the same time, Canada faced numerous political and social crises, all of which had been percolating quietly for many years. Quebec separatism reared its head in the October Crisis, Aboriginal land claims came to the front with the events at Oka, official multiculturalism manifested itself through a sudden increase in ‘visible minorities’ in our cities, while groups like Pollution Probe and Greenpeace warned Canadians that we were rapidly losing our natural environment. The stable Canada—and the traditional values—of our readers were in question; the glowering soldiers with guns outside the Peace Tower were a far cry from the smiling Mounties of our schoolbooks.

These events, perhaps not individually but cumulatively, made English Canadians question our assumptions about our country and fellow Canadians, while new Canadian Studies programmes in our universities opened discussions on Canadian national identity, raised questions about Canadians and our country, while attempting to define, precisely, what it means to be ‘Canadian’. And many of the people designing these programmes and raising these questions about Canadian identity received their first ideas of Canada through their school readers.

The Canadians who grew up with the readers of the 1920s and 1930s are now retired but those who used the readers of the 1950s and 1960s continue to be active in all aspects of Canadian life today—politicians, journalists, educators and others thinking and writing about Canadian national identity in the twenty-first century. While high school history lessons—and

⁴ Robert M. Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), p.217.

real life events and experiences—have, naturally, changed our ideas about Canada and Canadians, the early impression from our school readers must to some extent have coloured our ideas about what it means to be Canadian. This fact alone makes the examination of how Canadian national identity is constructed in the readers worthwhile.

Chapter One Introduction

In the classic *Peasants into Frenchmen*, Eugen Weber identifies the essential role played by state education in the construction of national identity. He reveals that the key tool in this project proved not to be, as one might have expected, the wall map of France, or the scenic engravings adorning the classroom, or even the history textbook with tales of military glory, but a simple illustrated storybook—a school reader—*Le Tour de la France par deux enfants*:

Every child knew, read, and reread the story of the two Alsatian boys who left their home after their father's death to fulfil his wish that they should live as Frenchmen. With great simplicity the book manages to introduce its readers to almost all the regions of France, their ways, scenes, history, and people.⁵

The school readers of my thesis play an identical role in constructing Canada for children. Like the pupils reading *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants* (henceforth *Le Tour*), Canadian children not only discover the 'imagined community' of their nation through simple stories and illustrations, but also take part in its construction through the act of reading the same school textbook as their contemporaries many miles away.⁶ The readers were children's first official introduction to Canada, effectively children's handbooks for Canadian citizenship, modelling their duties and responsibilities as 'young Canadians.' Also like *Le Tour*, the readers not only provide an overview of the nation's geography by visiting other children 'from sea to sea,' but also create a shared history, through the introduction of national myths and symbols.

This thesis examines constructions of English Canadian national identity in school readers approved for use in Grades Four to Six in Ontario public schools from 1909 to 1970, schoolbooks used by children aged eight to twelve throughout English-speaking Canada during the mid-twentieth century.⁷ How is Canadian national identity constructed within these readers? What are the main themes of this identity and do they change over time?

⁵ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1976).pp.334-35.

⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

⁷ I use the term 'English Canadian' in keeping with mainstream scholarship on Canadian identity, for example: Ian Angus, *A Border Within: National Identity, Cultural Plurality, and Wilderness* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1997).; Jack Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity," in *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century*, ed. David Taras and Beverly Rasporich (Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson Thomson Learning, 2001).; José E. Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006).; Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, University of Toronto Press paperback ed. (London;

While the lavishly illustrated readers comprise collections of prose, poetry and exposition designed to improve reading comprehension, the accompanying teachers' guides reveal the editors' intentions to reinforce Canadian identity through the creation of a common cultural heritage and values based upon a Canadian settler past. Because the readers themselves are official publications, authorised by the Ministry of Education for use in public elementary schools, one can infer that the national identity portrayed within these textbooks reflects the societal norms and values of English Canadian society of the time; these are the things that Canadians wanted their children to know about Canada, the type of learning referred to by the American educationalist Michael Apple as 'official knowledge'.⁸

In this chapter I review considerations of national identity and the role of state education in constructing the nation, followed by a summary of the principle metanarratives of Canadian national identity and the role of education in constructing Canadian national identity. Next I provide a review of the literature on national identity in school textbooks, particularly Canadian textbooks and school readers. I then evaluate the role of classroom materials in constructing national identity, using the example of *Le Tour*, followed by examples of how school readers are used in imagining Canada. This chapter concludes with a consideration of how this work contributes to understandings of the role of public education in constructing Canadian national identity.

Chapter Two reviews the methods used in this study. Chapters Three to Six each cover a single era between 1909 and 1970, based upon four distinct changes in the readers authorised for use in Ontario schools, including detailed descriptions of the textbooks themselves, the historical context, legislation and reports related to their use. Each of these chapters explores the emergence of the main metanarratives of twentieth century Canadian national identity. These findings are summarised in Chapter Seven, the Conclusion.

National identity

In this thesis I examine constructions of national identity through Canadian schoolbooks. But first, what is national identity? My research is informed primarily by the writings of four

Toronto: Routledge, 1999); Philip Resnick, *Thinking English Canada* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited, 1994).

⁸ Michael W Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*, Third ed. (New York and London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004).p.vii.

contemporary writers: Ernest Gellner, John Breuilly, Benedict Anderson and Eugene Weber. In *Nations and Nationalism*, Ernest Gellner describes the nation as a modern construct, evolved from earlier hunter-gatherer and agrarian societies. Gellner emphasises the role of state education in constructing national identity; education enables citizens to take an active part in the economy and governance of the modern industrial nation.⁹ John Breuilly examines varieties of nationalism and their origins, both as a product of and in opposition to the state in *Nationalism and the State*.¹⁰ For Breuilly, nationalism is political; he considers shared meanings and political organisation key to nationalism, and communication plays a significant role in this sharing of meanings and ideas. Benedict Anderson argues that modern nations are *Imagined Communities* constructed largely through mass communication.¹¹ Anderson identifies the role of both the tools of communication, and shared mass communication experiences, both central to state education, in constructing national identity. Eugene Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen* provides a classic example of the deliberate construction of national identity by the state, most particularly through free compulsory state education in the creation of the modern nation of France.¹² These themes of modernity, communication and state education are key to my examination of national identity in Canadian school textbooks, while the role of a shared culture and history in constructions of national identity, as described by both Ernest Renan and Stuart Hall, and shared traditions defined by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger also inform my research.¹³

Gellner, Breuilly, Anderson and Weber agree that questions of national identity are essentially *modern*. In contemporary academic writing the terms 'national identity' and 'nationalism' are frequently used interchangeably; Breuilly is one of the few who clearly differentiates between the terms, advocating restricting the use of the 'nationalism' to politics.¹⁴ Although Breuilly considers national identity to be purely a political phenomenon

⁹ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Second ed. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

¹⁰ John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, Second ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

¹¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.

¹² Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.

¹³ Ernest Renan, "What Is a Nation?," in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990)., Stuart Hall, "The Future of Identity," in *Identity and Belonging: Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Canadian Society*, ed. Sean P. Hier and B. Singh Bolaria (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc., 2006)., Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁴ Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*.p.420.

and Stuart Hall, for example, sees it as a cultural development, others acknowledge that national identity includes elements of both politics and culture.¹⁵

The nineteenth-century French philosopher Ernest Renan introduces both the political and cultural dimensions of national identity in his often-cited essay, 'What is a Nation?'

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form.¹⁶

The elements of 'present-day consent' and 'desire to live together' may be seen as political, whereas the 'legacy of memories' and 'heritage... received in an undivided form' clearly speak to both history and culture.

Gellner offers two 'provisional' definitions of 'the nation', both containing political and cultural components:

1. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating.
2. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they *recognize* each other as belonging to the same nation... nations are the artefacts of men's convictions and loyalties and solidarities.¹⁷

While Gellner refers to his first definition as 'cultural' and the second as 'voluntaristic', both definitions have a distinct political dimension: 'ways of behaving' suggests an understanding of the rules and conventions of behaviour, which, in turn, implies a form of social structure or governance. His second 'voluntaristic' definition includes shared 'loyalties and solidarities', which implies a political dimension—an opposition to something or somebody.¹⁸

National identity requires a differentiation from others; Renan's declaration that 'I am French' suggests that others are *not* French.¹⁹ But as Breuilly writes: 'The constant reiteration of the statement 'I am French' is empty unless linked to some notion of what being French means. In turn, that meaning can become politically significant only if shared by a number of people with effective organisation. It is the *shared meanings* and *their political organisation*

¹⁵ Hall, "The Future of Identity."

¹⁶ Renan, "What Is a Nation?".p.19.

¹⁷ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.p.7. Emphasis in original.

¹⁸ Ibid.p.7.

¹⁹ Renan, "What Is a Nation?".

that constitute nationalism rather than the purely subjective choices of individual Frenchmen.²⁰ Breuilly's 'shared meanings' play the same part in constructing national identity as Gellner's shared 'system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating', but while Breuilly firmly believes that national identity is essentially political, other writers tend to favour the cultural dimension, based in varying degrees upon combinations of commerce, communication, history and tradition.²¹

Gellner sees nationalism as not so much the product of a common history as a common culture—the modern culture of industrialisation.²² In *Nations and Nationalism*, he traces the three stages of human social development, from hunter-gather through agrarian to industrial, arguing that it is only with industrialization that true nationalism can occur.²³ Breuilly considers that Gellner's work 'represents the single most important attempt to provide a theory of nationalism as a whole... grounded in an overall vision of human history and an insistence on the uniqueness of the modern world.'²⁴ For Gellner, modernity is marked by industrialization, and nationalism is created by the culture of industrialization and the processes supporting it, especially mass education.²⁵

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson supports the role of modern industrialisation, specifically 'print capitalism', in the creation of national identity.²⁶ He argues that the rise of technology and subsequent mass communication allowed people not only to share a culture but also to imagine communities outside their immediate experience. Anderson credits print-capitalism with the standardisation of language, a common language being a key element in considerations of national identity:

These print-languages laid the bases for national consciousnesses in three distinct ways. First and foremost, they created unified fields of exchange and communication... Second, print-capitalism gave a new fixity to language... Third, print-capitalism created languages-of-power of a kind different from the older administration vernaculars.²⁷

²⁰ Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*.p.6. Emphasis mine.

²¹ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.p.7.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.p.106.

²⁴ John Breuilly, "Introduction," in *Nations and Nationalism (Second Edition)* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008).p.iii.

²⁵ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.p.106.

²⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.

²⁷ Ibid. p.44-45.

Eugene Weber recounts the difficulties of establishing a common language in constructing the nation of France, in *From Peasants into Frenchmen*, referring to the process as ‘the growing pains of modernity’.²⁸ He notes that,

Linguistic diversity had been irrelevant to administrative unity. But it became significant when it was perceived as a threat to political—that is, ideological—unity. All citizens had to understand what the interests of the Republic were and what the Republic was up to... Otherwise they could not participate, were not equipped to participate in it.²⁹

Here Weber is saying that a common language was not particularly important to the state for administrative purposes, but essential in the creation of ‘the nation’. The promulgation of the common language was possible only through the technology that made mass communication possible and, as will be discussed later, state education.

Gellner privileges the form over the actual content of communication in the dissemination of the nationalist ideas:

It is the media themselves, the pervasiveness and importance of abstract, centralized, standardized, one to many communication, which itself automatically engenders the core idea of nationalism, quite irrespective of what in particular is being put into the specific messages transmitted. The most important and persistent message is generated by the medium itself, by the role which such media have acquired in modern life.³⁰

This statement is reminiscent of Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan’s famous declaration: ‘The medium is the message,’ although Gellner does not reference McLuhan directly nor does he pursue this theme.³¹ Gellner continues:

That core message is that the language and style of the transmissions is important, that only he who can understand them, or can acquire such comprehension, is included in a moral and economic community, and that he who does not and cannot, is excluded.³²

In other words, having the skill and understanding to decode the ‘message’ imparts ‘membership’ in the ‘nation.’ This mirrors Weber’s observation that the common language is essential for ‘citizens’ to ‘participate’ in the Republic.³³ For Anderson too, it is act of participating in common rituals through mass media that creates national identity.³⁴ Gellner,

²⁸ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.82.

²⁹ Ibid.p.72.

³⁰ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. pp.121-22.

³¹ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (London: Routledge, 1964).

³² Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.p.122.

³³ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.72.

³⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.p.145.

Anderson and Weber emphasise the role of state education in imparting the skills, especially literacy, needed to participate in the modern nation; the role of education in constructing national identity is discussed below.

While Breuilly agrees with Anderson and Gellner that, 'The development of new methods of communication and improvements in the structure of communications make possible the transmission of ideas...on a scale hitherto unimaginable,' he does not believe that 'these developments by themselves explain the emergence of nationalist movements'.³⁵ However, he acknowledges that it is 'difficult to see how many nationalist movements could have acquired the support and influence they did' without the advent of and improvements to mass communication.³⁶ For Breuilly, the message is more important than the media that carry it, the content is more important than the process and the media is primarily a modern tool for the dissemination of political thought, whereas Gellner and Anderson sees the modern process of industrialization and its related communication as key to nationalism. The difference is that for Breuilly, it is the presence of the media, the availability of mass communication that provides the forum for political exchange and engenders nationalism.

Breuilly reviews and compares Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* and Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, summarising the authors' differing positions:

Gellner helps one understand that culture should not be seen as just one possible source of social and political identity, but as something which stands in a different relationship to modern societies compared to earlier societies... Anderson helps one understand more specifically why certain structures and patterns of communication can give a national form to the cultural imaginings of community.³⁷

While emphasising the political nature of nationalism, Breuilly acknowledges that, 'Nationalism clearly builds on some sense of cultural identity, even if it is the creator of that sense. It is clearly connected with new and extended systems of communication, although these cannot account for the development of specific nationalisms. The growth of capitalism has created new social classes with new objectives which nationalism might help serve.'³⁸

The role of cultural identity in creating nationalism, echoes the views of Ernest Renan, cited earlier. Renan's belief in the importance of a shared history in the creation of national

³⁵ Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*.pp.21-22.

³⁶ *Ibid*.p.22.

³⁷ "Reflections on Nationalism," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 15, no. 1 (1985).p.75.

³⁸ *Nationalism and the State*.p.420.

identity—his ‘legacy of memories’—is extended by Stuart Hall in his frequently quoted essay, ‘The Future of Identity.’³⁹ Hall defines national culture as a ‘discourse,’ constructing identity ‘by producing meanings about “the nation” with which we can *identify*; these are contained in the stories that are told about it, memories that connect its present with its past, and images that are constructed of it.’⁴⁰ Hall sees the ‘narrative of national culture’ as including five main elements: the narrative of the nation; origins, continuity, tradition, and timelessness; the invention of tradition; the foundational myth; and the pure, original people or “folk.”⁴¹ This is analogous to Anderson’s appreciation of the ‘image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation’.⁴²

In *The Invention of Tradition*, historians Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger observe that traditions are ‘highly relevant to that comparatively recent historical innovation, the “nation”, with its associated phenomena: nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest’ which, he believes, ‘cannot be adequately investigated without careful attention to the ‘invention of tradition’.⁴³ Gellner agrees that ‘the cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary historical inventions’, arguing that ‘Nationalism uses the pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively... Dead languages can be revived, traditions invented, quite fictitious pristine purities restored.’⁴⁴ However, he considers that ‘this culturally creative, fanciful, positively inventive aspect of nationalist ardour ought not to allow anyone to conclude, erroneously, that nationalism is a contingent, artificial, ideological invention.’⁴⁵

In summary, there is general consensus that national identity is a modern construct, with both political and cultural elements, based upon a common language and, as Breuilly writes, ‘a set of common ideas... shared meanings.’⁴⁶ These ‘shared meanings’ organised from a combination of political, cultural and economic perspectives, are disseminated through mass communication and state education. I will now examine the role of state education in constructing national identity.

³⁹ Hall, "The Future of Identity."

⁴⁰ Ibid.p.254. Emphasis in original.

⁴¹ Ibid.p.252.

⁴² Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. pp.44-45.

⁴³ Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).p.14.

⁴⁴ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.pp.54-55.

⁴⁵ Ibid.pp.55-56.

⁴⁶ Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*.p.6.

Constructing the nation in the classroom

I introduced this chapter with an example from Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen*, a classic work on state-led nationalism. Weber recounts the difficulties of constructing the nation, not simply defining an abstract territory but also imbuing a culture:

The fatherland was somewhere more (indeed, something else) than where their fathers obviously lived. A vast program of indoctrination was plainly called for to persuade people that the fatherland extended beyond its evident limits to something vast and intangible called France.⁴⁷

Here Weber raises two important themes in constructing a national identity: the 'program of indoctrination', and the 'intangible' nature of 'the nation'. The site for this 'programme of indoctrination'—the construction of the nation of France in the minds of the population—was the schoolroom. He describes the role of education in France's hegemonic nationalizing project, describing schooling as 'a major agent of acculturation: shaping individuals to fit into societies and cultures broader than their own, and persuading them that these broader realms are their own, as much as the *pays* they really know and more.'⁴⁸

Weber refers to the 'process of acculturation' as being 'akin to colonization' observing that it 'may be easier to understand if one bears that in mind.'⁴⁹ In *Ideology and Curriculum*, Michael Apple speaks particularly to the hegemonic process of state education, 'how institutions of cultural preservation and distribution like schools create and recreate forms of consciousness that enable social control to be maintained without the necessity of dominant groups having to resort to overt mechanisms of domination.'⁵⁰

The 'process of acculturation' involves three main elements. The first is communication—the establishment of a common language. The second is economic—the educated citizen is an economic benefit to the nation, able to participate in the modern industrial society and the third is cultural—the transmission and maintenance of cultural values.

⁴⁷ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.334.

⁴⁸ Ibid.p.330-31. Emphasis mine.

⁴⁹ Ibid.p.486.

⁵⁰ Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.p.2.

For Weber, state education imparts not only the skills needed to participate in the nation, but also the tools to understand—to imagine—the nation. Weber considers that this is the role of state education: ‘The schools provide a complementary, even a counter-education, because the education of the local society does not coincide with that needed to create a national one.’⁵¹ For Gellner the idea that people should ‘fit into societies and cultures broader than their own’ marks the shift from an agrarian society to the modern industrial society. He agrees that state education is essential in constructing the modern industrialised nation: ‘The obverse of the fact that a school-transmitted culture, not a folk-transmitted one, alone confers his usability and dignity and self-respect on industrial man, is the fact that nothing else can do it for him to any comparable extent.’⁵²

Gellner’s distinction between the ‘folk-transmitted’ culture and the unifying ‘school-transmitted’ culture is precisely the condition described by Weber, where free compulsory state education transforms a scattered diverse agrarian society into a modern society, the nation. Gellner considers that education is far too important to leave to local interests:

The level of literacy and technical competence, in a standardized medium, a common conceptual currency, which is required of members of this society if they are to be properly employable and enjoy full and effective moral citizenship, is so high that it simply *cannot* be provided by the kin or local units, such as they are. It can only be provided by something resembling a modern ‘national’ education system.⁵³

Gellner is speaking not simply to economic participation but also to ‘full and effective moral citizenship’⁵⁴

The economic value of education extends beyond the ability of the individual to acquire personal wealth and contribute to the national economy. An educated population is a hallmark of modern national identity, as is exemplified by numerous reports on international educational rankings, for example the 2012 ‘Education and Skills’ report by the Conference Board of Canada, which ranked Canada ‘2nd among 16 peer countries’.⁵⁵ These types of reports, not only on public school education but also post-secondary institutions, either engender pride at the nation’s achievement or panic in Ministries of Education, with questions

⁵¹ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.p.35.

⁵² Ibid. p.35.

⁵³ Ibid.p.33.

⁵⁴ Ibid.p.33.

⁵⁵ Conference Board of Canada, "Education and Skills," <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/details/education.aspx>.

asked about the efficiency of the system and effectiveness of the curriculum. Having an internationally recognised highly educated population---cultural capital—is a significant factor in a modern nation’s identity.

The third role of state education in constructing national identity is the transmission of the traditions, the myths, the shared meanings—the culture—of the nation. Apple refers to this as ‘official knowledge’; historian José Igartua summarises it as the ‘conventional wisdom that the generation holding power wanted to transmit to following generations.’⁵⁶ Igartua’s reference to ‘the generation holding power’ is central here; as Apple asks: “Whose knowledge is of most worth?”⁵⁷ Precisely whose traditions are conveyed through the state education system? Who creates and selects the textbooks, designs the curriculum? As Breuilly writes: ‘To focus upon culture, ideology, identity, class or modernisation is to neglect the fundamental point that nationalism is, above all, about politics and that politics is about power.’⁵⁸

American educationalist Michael Apple identifies the power behind twentieth century North American education: ‘As we shall see, schools were not necessarily built to enhance or preserve the cultural capital of classes or communities other than the most powerful segments of the population. *The hegemonic role of the intellectual*, of the professional educator, in this development is quite clear.’⁵⁹ Apple defines the ‘formative members of the curriculum field’ as being ‘by birth and upbringing members of a native and rural middle class, Protestant in religion, and Anglo-Saxon in descent.’⁶⁰ These educators ‘reflected and spoke to the concerns of the middle class’: ‘Specifically, they reflected what they believed was the declining power and influence of the middle class in the wake of America’s transition in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from a rural agrarian society to an urban, industrialized one.’⁶¹ They expressed not only the goal of maintaining traditional values but also a distinct anxiety at changing society. In North America, this unease in the face of modern urban industrial society manifested itself in the antimodernist movement.

Historian T. J. Jackson Lears has long been considered the authority on the antimodernism. In *No Place of Grace* he writes, ‘the antimodern impulse was rooted in what

⁵⁶ Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71*.p.12.

⁵⁷ Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.p.xix.

⁵⁸ Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*.p.1.

⁵⁹ Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.p.59. Emphasis in original.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*.p.67.

⁶¹ *Ibid*.p.67.

can aptly be called a crisis of cultural authority, which had both public and private dimensions.’⁶² As Lears describes it, antimodernism is essentially a sense of disquiet and anxiety, the social tensions caused by rapid industrialization and urban living, the move from the agricultural or small-town existence to the modern city. It is important to note that Lears does not see antimodernism as rejecting modernization and industrialization entirely—it was not an attempt to halt progress, but to find ways to accommodate progress while maintaining ‘authenticity’: ‘Antimodernism was not simply escapism; it was ambivalent, often coexisting with enthusiasm for material progress.’⁶³

The antimodernists’ unease described by Lears is comparable to the apprehension expressed by the intellectual leaders referenced by Apple, indeed educational reformers number among Lears’ examples: ‘journalists, academics, ministers, and literati... Old-stock, Protestant, they were the moral and intellectual leaders of the American WASP bourgeoisie’ with the goal of maintaining ‘the dominant norms and values.’⁶⁴ Although Apple does not use the term ‘antimodernism’ he describes precisely the same anxiety among American educational leaders in the early twentieth century:

They defined the issues in a particular way, as a problem of the *loss* of community... They felt their social order, which they viewed as being rooted in the small rural town with its deep, face to face personal relationships, was endangered.’⁶⁵

Apple’s educationalists perceived cities—and their immigrant population—as a threat to a homogeneous American culture: ‘The “community” that the English and Protestant forebearers of this class had “carved from a wilderness” seemed to be crumbling before an expanding urban and industrial society.’⁶⁶

Antimodernism had a distinct effect on constructions of national identity in twentieth century North American school curriculum. The ‘conventional wisdom’ and shared meanings’ were the ‘traditional values’ of the ‘intellectual leaders’ referred to by Lears and Apple, and, as will be discussed below, their counterparts in Canada. As Lears indicates, these ‘opinion-makers’ ‘exercised crucial cultural power’: ‘As some of the most educated and cosmopolitan products of an urbanizing, secularizing society, they were the “point men” of cultural change.

⁶² T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace - Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*, 1994 ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981). p.5.

⁶³ *Ibid.* p.xv.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p.xvi.

⁶⁵ Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.p.67. Emphasis in original.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* pp.67-68. Emphasis in original.

They experienced and articulated moral and psychic dilemmas which later became common in the wider society.’⁶⁷

Constructing Canadian Identity

In this section I review the main discussions of Canadian national identity, a construct referred to by historian Jack Bumsted as ‘an almost exclusively English-Canadian notion’, as they apply to the readers in this study.⁶⁸ The term ‘English-Canadian’ has multiple meanings, with some contemporary writers using ‘English Canadian’ to indicate all English-speaking Canadians, or to differentiate between those who are not Aboriginal or French-speaking, whereas others mean specifically those of British descent. The shift from a ‘British Canadian’ identity to the ‘English Canadian’ identity is key to constructions of Canadian national identity within the readers.

Bumsted writes that, ‘there has never been within Canada a single authorized version of Canadian nationalism, no agreed-upon Canadian identity, and certainly no correspondence between political party allegiance and nationalist visions.’⁶⁹ Scholarship on Canadian national identity is similarly diffuse, represented in a host of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary fields, such as historical geography, environmental history and the catch-all ‘Canadian Studies’.

The principle writings on Canadian identity that have informed my research can be divided roughly into two questions: ‘Who are we?’ and ‘Where is here?’ The first attempts to identify ‘Canadians,’ the second reflects literary critic Northrop Frye’s attempts to define national identity in Canadian literature in terms of location.⁷⁰ Both questions are developed through a combination of historical, geographical and cultural sources and equate to the two main metanarratives in late twentieth century Canadian identity: multiculturalism and wilderness.

⁶⁷ Lears, *No Place of Grace - Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*.p.xvii.

⁶⁸ Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity."p.17.

⁶⁹ Ibid.p.17.

⁷⁰ Northrop Frye, *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination* (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1965).

First: 'Who are we?' Most scholarship treating Canadian identity from a historical perspective begins with Canada's relationship to Britain and emergence as an independent nation while maintaining ties to the Commonwealth. Jack Bumsted's 'A Vision of Canada', his contribution to *A Passion for Identity*, is a brief but comprehensive summary of the main elements of Canadian national identity from a historian's perspective, beginning with Canada as a part of the British Empire, then identifying particular turning points and influences of individuals in twentieth-century Canadian identity.⁷¹

Phillip Buckner has focused on the development of Canadian identity within the British Empire in several books including *Canada and the End of Empire*.⁷² Buckner does not see the acknowledgement of British heritage as a form of cultural imperialism, more a simple acceptance of the facts of immigration and settlement. Buckner's perspective is largely supported by John Darwin's 'Empire and Ethnicity': 'It is easy to forget that until the 1950s and 1960s, Canada, Australia and New Zealand... were thought of in Britain, and seen by themselves, as "British nations" or "British peoples".'⁷³ Historian José Igartua shares precisely the same view.⁷⁴ As we will see, this perspective on Canada as a part of the British Empire and later Commonwealth dominates constructions of Canadian identity throughout the readers. Francis and Igartua explore the role of schoolbooks, especially history textbooks, in constructing and maintaining a Canadian identity based upon British imperialism. The particular shape of British imperial ethnicity will be examined in detail in Chapters Three and Four. This particular identity also appears in the trope of the pioneer ancestor, the British settlers who cleared the land and constructed homes in the wilderness, a theme common throughout the readers. Atwood identifies a principle theme in Canadian literature in both *Survival* and *Strange Things* and the settlement in the wilderness is key to Frye's 'garrison' theory of Canadian literature.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity."

⁷² Philip Buckner, "Canada and the End of Empire, 1939-1982," in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Philip Buckner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)., Phillip Buckner, ed. *Canada and the British World : Culture, Migration and Identity* (Vancouver UBC Press, 2006)., Buckner, "The Creation of the Dominion of Canada, 1860-1901."

⁷³ John Darwin, "Empire and Ethnicity," *Nations and Nationalism* 16, no. 3 (2010).p.395.

⁷⁴ Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71*.pp.5-6.

⁷⁵ Margaret Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1972)., *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

The dominant British settler society defines Others: Aboriginal peoples, French-Canadians and 'New Canadians'. Immigration policies, as described by Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock in *The Making of the Mosaic* precluded people of many ethnicities immigrating to Canada prior to the mid-1960s. While multiculturalism policies date from 1971, it was not enshrined until *The Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988*; the roots of a multicultural society can be found in the readers of the 1930s as English Canadians establish their own identity while welcoming newcomers to Canada.⁷⁶ Eva Mackey in *The House of Difference*, questions the role of multiculturalism in late twentieth century Canadian identity: 'In Canada, however, cultural pluralism is institutionalised as a key figure of the mythology of the identity of the dominant white Anglophone majority.'⁷⁷ She refers to 'Canadian-Canadians' as the 'dominant culture of Canada.' This thesis explores the role of the readers in constructing both the 'Canadian-Canadian' dominant society, the role of Others, including Aboriginal peoples, French and 'New Canadians' and the view of Canada as a multicultural society.

Former Governor-General Vincent Massey acknowledges the British heritage and ties to Britain through the Commonwealth, while identifying distinct Canadian culture.⁷⁸ Massey is considered to be highly influential in constructing twentieth century Canadian national identity, both within and outside his role as Governor General. As Chair of the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* Massey influenced the preservation, creation and support for Canadian arts and cultural institutions, especially in the face of rising influence of American mass media.⁷⁹ In *On Being Canadian* he writes extensively on the role of state education in constructing Canadian identity. Jack Bumsted identifies Massey as one of the key figures influencing constructions of Canadian identity through the mid-twentieth century and he represents the cultural and social elite so influential in education and his philosophy is key to constructions of Canadian identity, particularly in the readers of the 1950s.⁸⁰

Although Frye's question of 'Where is here?' stems from a literary perspective, it speaks to the role of geography in constructions of Canadian identity. Historical geographer

⁷⁶ Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

⁷⁷ Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*.p.3.

⁷⁸ Vincent Massey, *On Being Canadian* (London, Toronto: J.M.Dent & Sons Ltd., 1948).

⁷⁹ Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts Letters and Sciences, "Report," (1951).

⁸⁰ Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity."p.27.

Cole Harris establishes the importance of location in Canadian national identity: 'When people weigh the nature and basis of their nationalism they usually dwell on aspects of their culture, history, or race; but English-speaking Canadians tend to explain themselves in terms of land and location.'⁸¹ Harris identifies the work of Canadian economist and philosopher Harold Innis as central to constructions of Canadian identity. Innis is responsible for the 'staples' theory of Canadian economy, that is Canada developed based on the fur trade and other commodities. Innis is also credited with the development of the 'Laurentian thesis' of Canadian identity.⁸² Also known as the 'Canadian Shield' theory, this is based on the patterns of exploration and development of Canada following the waterways St Lawrence River and its drainage basin from east to west, and the flow of commerce from east-west to Europe (Britain) rather than north-south to the United States. Bumsted agrees that Innis is one of the main influences on constructions of Canadian identity and his views on the Canadian Shield as central to understanding Canada is one of the core messages within the readers.⁸³ Historians Donald Creighton and William Morton expand on the Laurentian thesis and it is central to Ian Angus' writing on Canadian identity in *The Border Within*.⁸⁴

Harris contrasts the 'Laurentians' with the 'Continentalists' whose studies 'have tended to emphasize the mingling of the Canadian and American people,' based upon Canada's geographical location in North America.⁸⁵ The Continentalists propose a north-south affiliation rather than the east-west axis of the Laurentian theory. The Laurentian theory of the east-west development of the country based upon the St Lawrence drainage basin dominates the geographical constructions of Canada within the readers, whereas there are very few examples of any relationship between Canada and the United States. This could be seen, at least in part, as maintaining both culture and economic ties with Britain rather than forging links with the United States.

⁸¹ Cole Harris, "The Myth of the Land in Canadian Nationalism," in *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art*, ed. John O'Brian and Peter White (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007). p.239.

⁸² Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, Fourth ed. (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1930).

⁸³ Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity." pp.25-26.

⁸⁴ W.L. Morton, *The Canadian Identity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961)., Angus, A *Border Within: National Identity, Cultural Plurality, and Wilderness*.

⁸⁵ Harris, "The Myth of the Land in Canadian Nationalism."p.239. Here Harris includes A.S.Morton, Fred Landon, A.R.M. Lower, Frank Unhill and A.L. Burt, citing J.B. Brebner's opinion that "Perhaps the most striking thing about Canada is that it is not part of the United States.'

Despite the importance of the east-west axis of the Laurentian thesis, the North is hugely important in Canadian identity. 'North' is frequently conflated with 'wilderness' in writing on Canadian identity; within the readers they are not necessarily the same, indeed there is occasionally doubt as to whether the Arctic and its inhabitants are actually Canadian. The place of North in Canadian literature, fine arts and popular culture is examined by Sherrill Grace in *Canada and the Idea of North*, while Brian Osborne focusses on the 'geography of identity', the role of landscape in Canadian identity.⁸⁶

The 'Where is here?' question was originally voiced by literary critic Northrop Frye in the development of his 'garrison mentality' theory of Canadian literature. Frye bases his critique on the small isolated communities surrounded by wilderness —effectively, the patterns of settlement described by Harris. Literary critic Margaret Atwood expands on this concept in her landmark *Survival*, the first major scholarship on the genre of Canadian literature. Here Atwood identifies the key role of wilderness in Canadian literature and in her later *Strange Things* provides an in-depth examination of the imagery of the Canadian North in national identity and culture.⁸⁷

Librarian Sheila Egoff's *The Republic of Childhood* was the first significant scholarly work on Canadian children's literature while Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman provide a comprehensive examination of national identity in Canadian children's literature in *Picturing Canada*.⁸⁸ Interestingly, school readers are not mentioned in either of these works, although the readers were many children's first exposure—possibly *only* exposure—to Canadian writers and illustrators and many of those cited also contributed to the readers. Both books recognise the incorporation of Aboriginal mythology into Canadian culture, in addition to identifying the wilderness survival theme advanced by Atwood.

The role of the fine arts, particularly the work of the Group of Seven, in constructing national identity is the subject of *Beyond Wilderness*; authors John O'Brian & Peter White

⁸⁶ Sherrill E. Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2001)., Brian S. Osborne, "Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in Its Place," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 33, no. 3 (2001).

⁸⁷ Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*., *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature*.

⁸⁸ Sheila Egoff, *The Republic of Childhood: A Critical Guide to Canadian Children's Literature*, Second ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975)., Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

refer to landscape as a 'powerful political unifier' in postcolonial settler nations, especially Canada.⁸⁹ Contributor Joyce Zemans writes about the role of the National Gallery of Canada in constructing Canadian identity through its art distribution programmes, while Linda Jessup explores the role of Antimodernism in constructions of Canadian identity in fine arts.⁹⁰ Jessup furthers her study in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience*, with contributions from Benedict Anderson and Ian McKay, while Sharon Wall's *Nurture of Nature* explores antimodernism in Ontario summer camps during the same period as the readers in this study; in Chapter Six I examine the relationship between the summer camps and readers of the same period.⁹¹ Antimodernism is a recurrent—and dominant—theme in constructions of Canadian national identity throughout the readers.

In summary, the question of 'Who are we?' is generally covered by British imperial identity and multiculturalism, with Vincent Massey identified as a key influence on the particular form of Canadian national identity in readers, especially those used from 1950s. 'Where is here?', the geographical aspect of Canadian identity, is influenced by the Laurentian thesis of Harold Innis and the trope of wilderness (or Northern) survival as described by Atwood, while the theme of antimodernism, exemplified by the enforcement of traditional values in rural or wilderness settings permeates the readers, affecting ideas about Canada and its inhabitants.

The Canadian writers cited in this thesis, at least those who were educated in Canadian public schools throughout the twentieth century, would have gained their first formal understandings of 'Canada' through their school readers. While the earlier *Ontario Readers* were only used in that province, the readers in other provinces were very similar in form and content, and the readers used in Ontario from the 1930s to 1970s were also used across Canada. Perhaps it was the 'Canada' presented in the readers—or the contrast between that 'Canada' and their later experience that informed their interest in Canadian national identity.

⁸⁹ John O'Brian and Peter White, eds., *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity and Contemporary Art* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2007).p.4.

⁹⁰ Joyce Zemans, "Establishing the Canon: Nationhood, Identity, and the National Gallery's First Reproduction Programme of Canadian Art," in *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art*, ed. John O'Brian and Peter White (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007)., Lynda Jessup, "Bushwackers in the Gallery: Antimodernism and the Group of Seven," in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

⁹¹ Sharon Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009).

*Canadian education and national identity: "To our schools we must look for the good Canadian."*⁹²

Gellner stresses the role of a 'homogeneous and standardizing' state education system in constructing national identity.⁹³ Since Confederation in 1867, Canadian education has been the responsibility of the provinces and while there are numerous comparable elements, there is no cohesive national education system in Canada. Unlike the national education systems of many nations—including Weber's example of France—Canadian schools permit different languages of instruction; in many nations religion plays no part in national education whereas in some Canadian provinces schools may be divided by religious affiliation into 'Public' schools, which are either Protestant or non-denominational, and Roman Catholic 'Separate' schools. Today any school district in Ontario may include four distinct school boards, depending upon the language and religious affiliations of the local population: English Public, English Separate, French Public and French Separate.

In *Public Schools and Political Ideas*, Canadian academic Ronald Manzer provides a historical perspective on educational policies in Canada. Manzer considers that unlike the 'homogeneous' education system prescribed by Gellner, Canadian schools are 'stakes in struggles for political power.' He continues:

Educational politics and policy-making are rent by conflicting political, economic, and cultural interests that seek to organize schools to fit particular conceptions of a good community and a good life and to teach knowledge and skills serving particular interests, or at least particular concepts of the public interest.⁹⁴

Other work on Canadian education emphasises these differences; for example, *Canadian Education* and *Studies in Educational Change*, anthologies which examine provincial similarities and differences, with particular focus on language and religion.⁹⁵ Manzer's own writing centres on 'the establishment of religion in public education, the organization and

⁹² Vincent Massey, "Introduction," in *This Canada of Ours: An Introduction to Canadian Civics*, ed. C.N. Cochrane and W.S. Wallace (Toronto: National Council of Education, 1926).p.11.

⁹³ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.pp.106-07.

⁹⁴ Ronald Manzer, *Public Schools and Political Ideas: Canadian Public Educational Policy in Historical Perspective* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1994).p.3.

⁹⁵ J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, and Louis-Philippe Audet, *Canadian Education: A History*, ed. J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, and Louis-Philippe Audet (Scarborough: Hemel Hempstead 1970)., Richard D. Heyman, Robert F. Lawson, and Robert M. Stamp, *Studies in Educational Change*, ed. Richard D. Heyman, Robert F. Lawson, and Robert M. Stamp (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1972).

curricula of secondary education, and the official language of instruction in public schools.⁹⁶ He writes: 'As stakes in power struggles public schools are not only objects of domination and products of compromise, they are also potentially agencies for creating political consensus. Their organization and curricula may be imposed by a dominant social group or result from accommodation among conflicting interests.'⁹⁷

Despite lack of a national education system and the disparate provincial education systems, there was one unifying factor in Canadian education: the school textbook. As I recount in Chapter Three, in the early days of education in English speaking Canada, a variety of school books were used. From the late nineteenth century textbooks were produced with a view to being used across the country as described by educational historian Penney Clark in 'The Rise and Fall of Textbook Publishing in Canada'.⁹⁸ The publication of 'national' rather than 'provincial' textbooks was more economic than philosophical; publishers vied to supply books that would be acceptable in English-speaking schools across the country rather than catering to a single province. While some history and geography texts maintained a regional identity, as described by educational historian Amy von Heyking in her study of education in Alberta, by the 1930s the readers used in Ontario were aimed at a national use and the four reading series published in the mid-1940s were clearly intended to be used in English-speaking schools across the country.⁹⁹ Effectively, these readers became vehicles for creating a Canadian national identity. Von Heyking considers that 'curriculum, textbooks and other teaching resources are expressions of "official" ideologies regarding identity, community and citizenship.'¹⁰⁰

Earlier I examined Michael Apple's thoughts on the influence of 'opinion makers' in shaping national identity through education: 'After all, the decision to define some groups' knowledge as worthwhile to pass on to future generations while other groups' culture and history hardly see the light of day says something extremely important about who has power in society.'¹⁰¹ Previously I introduced Vincent Massey, a member of Canada's intellectual and

⁹⁶ Manzer, *Public Schools and Political Ideas: Canadian Public Educational Policy in Historical Perspective*.p.49.

⁹⁷ Ibid.p.3.

⁹⁸ Penney Clark, "The Rise and Fall of Textbook Publishing in Canada," in *History of the Book in Canada Volume Three 1918-1980*, ed. Carole Gerson and Jacques Michon (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

⁹⁹ Amy von Heyking, *Creating Citizens - History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2006).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.p.5.

¹⁰¹ Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.p.xx.

social elite, who had considerable influence over Canadian national identity and education during the middle of the twentieth century. Although not an educator himself, Massey firmly believed in the place of schools in creating a Canadian national identity, expressing his views in the often-quoted 'Introduction' to the 1926 *This Canada of Ours: An Introduction to Canadian Civics*:

In a country with so scattered a population as ours and a vast frontier exposed to alien influences, the task of creating a truly national feeling must inevitably be arduous, but this is the undertaking to which our educational systems must address themselves, for by true education alone will the problem be solved. *To our schools we must look for the good Canadian.*¹⁰²

Massey expanded on his belief in the role of schools in establishing Canadian identity with the 1948 publication of *On Being Canadian*:

Canadian boys and girls will become good Canadians by breathing the atmosphere of Canada in their schools. If their teaching and their studies and their school life reflect Canada, they will absorb its spirit almost, as it were, through their pores. Then they will be Canadians not artificially, but through a natural process.¹⁰³

Canadian Parade of Reading series editor Donald Dickie answers Massey's appeal: 'In the *Canadian Parade Readers* we offer books with a truly Canadian atmosphere which present the ideals of the Canadian way of life.'¹⁰⁴ These statements illustrate the importance of education in the construction of Canadian identity, not simply on the part of educators like Dickie but also among Canada's cultural and political leadership.

National identity in school textbooks

Contemporary writing on national identity in school textbooks deals largely with issues of ethnicity and gender, especially the absence or misrepresentation of minority groups and treatment of women and focuses more on individual or group identity within the nation.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Massey, "Introduction." p.11. Emphasis mine.

¹⁰³ *On Being Canadian*. p.182.

¹⁰⁴ Donald Dickie, ed. *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Gay Adventurers*, Canadian Parade Readers (Toronto, Vancouver: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1948). p.vi.

¹⁰⁵ Examples include: Stuart J. Foster, "The Struggle for American Identity: Treatment of Ethnic Groups in United States History Textbooks," *History of Education* 28, no. 3 (1999)., Maria Haigh, "Making Ukrainians in the Library: Language, Libraries, and National Identity," *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science* 33, no. 3/4 (2009); Rachel D. Hutchins, "Heroes and the Renegotiation of National Identity in American History Textbooks: Representations of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, 1982-2003," *Nations and Nationalism* 17, no. 3 (2011)., E.F. Keyman and Tuba Kanci, "A Tale of Ambiguity: Citizenship, Nationalism and Democracy in Turkey," *ibid.*, no. 2., David Limond, "[a]l Our Scotch Education Is in Vain': The Construction of Scottish

While most concentrate on high school books, especially history texts, Lyn Parker's 'Subjectification of Citizenship' is one of the few to examine constructions of national identity in elementary school texts, in this case the readers used in Bali. Sylvie Guichard and Haggay Ram explore 'selective amnesia' in presentations of national histories in school texts; this relates closely to work done on Canadian school texts by historian Daniel Francis.¹⁰⁶ In 'Huts in the Wilderness' Jane McGennissen explores constructions of national identity in early twentieth-century Australian elementary schoolbooks, revealing numerous similarities with the Canadian readers in this study, particularly in the role of the pioneer in the creation of national identity.¹⁰⁷ These similarities will be discussed further in Chapter Four, particularly the use of identical materials in both the Australian and Canadian readers, and also in Chapter Five.

Most contemporary writing on the role of Canadian schoolbooks in constructing identity focuses on multiculturalism: for example, *Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education: Issues and Innovations* deals extensively with 'Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework,' a federal government policy introduced into the House of Commons in 1971.¹⁰⁸ Other published works on Canadian textbooks and identity focus on Aboriginal education, issues of gender, and urban education, primarily in high school textbooks of the 1970s and beyond.¹⁰⁹

National Identity in and by the Early Dominie Books of A.S. Neill," *History of Education* 28, no. 3 (1999).; Peter W. Rodgers, "Contestation and Negotiation: Regionalism and the Politics of School Textbooks in Ukraine's Eastern Borderlands," *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 4 (2006).; Pieter Troch, "Between Yugoslavism and Serbianism: Reshaping Collective Identity in Serbian Textbooks between the World Wars," *History of Education* 41, no. 2 (2012).

¹⁰⁶ Sylvie Guichard, "The Indian Nation and Selective Amnesia: Representing Conflicts and Violence in Indian History Textbooks," *Nations and Nationalism* 19, no. 1 (2013).; Lyn Parker, "The Subjectification of Citizenship: Student Interpretations of School Teachings in Bali," *Asian Studies Review* 26, no. 1 (2002).; Haggay Ram, "The Immemorial Iranian Nation? School Texts and Historical Memory in Post-Revolutionary Iran," *Nations and Nationalism* 6, no. 1 (2000); Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997).

¹⁰⁷ Jane McGennissen, "Huts in the Wilderness: Pioneering in School Readers," *Journal of Australian Studies* 34, no. 1 (2010).

¹⁰⁸ John R. Mallea, "Introduction: Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education," in *Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education: Issues and Innovations*, ed. John R. Mallea and Jonathan C. Young (Ottawa: Carlton University Press, 1984).p.9.

¹⁰⁹ Examples include: T. Aoki et al., "Whose Culture? Whose Heritage? Ethnicity within Canadian Social Studies Curricula," in *Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education*, ed. John R. Mallea (Ottawa: Carlton University Press, 1974).; Cynthia Chambers, "A Topography for Canadian Curriculum Theory," *Canadian Journal of Education* 24, no. 2 (1999).; David Pratt, "The Social Role of School Textbooks in Canada," in *Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education*, ed. John R. Mallea (Ottawa: Carlton University Press, 1975).

Historians José Igartua and Daniel Francis both draw extensively on history textbooks in their interpretations of Canadian social history.¹¹⁰ In *The OTHER Quiet Revolution*, Igartua uses a combination of newspaper editorials, public opinion polls and history textbooks in exploring constructions of English-Canadian identity, particularly as related to Canada's aboriginal peoples, and Francis covers similar ground in *The Imaginary Indian*. In *National Dreams* Francis unpacks the myths of Canadian identity, relying on newspaper reports and school texts, including the *Ontario Readers*. Both Igartua and Francis prove helpful in uncovering constructions of Canadian identity within the readers, particularly with reference to the invention of national mythologies and traditions as will be seen in Chapters Three to Six.

In *Creating Citizens* educational historian Amy von Heyking addresses constructions of identity in Alberta schoolbooks from 1905 to 1980.¹¹¹ While she deals specifically with Alberta regionalism and constructions of an Alberta identity, her writing on 'progressive education,' especially the 'Enterprise System' clarifies the intentions of this pedagogical method, which influenced teaching—and the readers—in Ontario public schools from 1950 to the 1970s. She discusses Canadian national identity in Alberta's school readers in the early part of the twentieth century, particularly the *Alexandra Readers* which seem to be more reflective of British imperialism than the *Ontario Readers* of the same period, but does not include the post-World War II readers.¹¹² *Creating Citizens* concentrates primarily on the influence of history textbooks and readers for older children in the creation of an Alberta identity, placing responsibility for developing identity on 'citizenship' and history classes. It is worth noting that no parallel attempts are made to establish a regional (or provincial) identity in Ontario, at least not in the readers studied in this thesis; the Grade Four to Six readers used in Ontario from 1937 to 1970 focus entirely on a unifying Canadian identity, probably because they were intended to be marketed to school boards across the country.

Chapter Three provides a detailed review of the early history of education in Ontario and Chapters Three to Six each include the reports and legislation affecting the introduction

¹¹⁰ Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71.*; Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*, 7th printing ed. (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992)., *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History*.

¹¹¹ von Heyking, *Creating Citizens - History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980*.

¹¹² For example, von Heyking discusses the influence of Alberta educator Donald Dickie's award-winning history books, but does not mention the 1947 *Canadian Parade Readers*, which Dickie edited, or Dickie's consulting work on the 1962 *Canadian Heritage Readers*, both approved for use in Alberta as well as other provinces.

of each set of readers. Here I will simply summarise the main academic works on school textbooks, particularly readers, from the field of Canadian educational history. These works provide a useful historical and political background, but do not contribute directly to discussions on constructions of Canadian national identity within the Grade Four to Six readers used in Ontario between 1909 and 1970.

The authority on the business of textbook publishing in Canada is undoubtedly educational historian Penney Clark. Her most recent writings fall outside the dates of my study, but provide essential background for the development and publication of the *Ontario Readers* of 1909 and explanations for the decline of Canadian educational publishing of the 1970s and 1980s, both of which will be discussed in later chapters.¹¹³ In these articles, Clark focuses specifically on the economics and politics of the Canadian textbook publishing industry and does not examine content or aims of the readers in any detail. Educational historian Patrice Milewski has focused his work on the 1930s pedagogical changes in education in Ontario with the introduction of the Enterprise System in “'The Little Grey Book': Pedagogy, Discourse and Rupture in 1937.’ His recent article, “'I Paid No Attention To It': An Oral History of Curricular Change in the 1930s,” describes the effect of these changes on teachers, many of whom were not prepared to deal with an entirely new method of teaching.¹¹⁴ He does not discuss the contents of the readers of this period or teaching methods with reference to the construction of Canadian identity. Theodore Michael Christou writes about progressive education in Ontario from 1919 to 1942, focusing on the educational theories of the era.¹¹⁵

Robert Stamp’s *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* is the authoritative work on education in the province during the period. Stamp provides an especially detailed account of early education in the province and social climate of each era. Following the curriculum reforms of the 1930s, he focusses on the expanding secondary education system, especially in the post-war years. His information on teacher training is particularly thorough and the appendices include numerous helpful tables. In *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario’s Schools*, educator R.D. Gidney examines changes to education in Ontario during the

¹¹³ Penney Clark, “'Liberty of Trade from the Thralldom of the Autocrats': Provision of School Textbooks in Ontario, 1850-1909,” *Canadian Journal of Education* 29, no. 4 (2006); “The Rise and Fall of Textbook Publishing in Canada.”

¹¹⁴ Patrice Milewski, “'I Paid No Attention to It': An Oral History of Curricular Change in the 1930s,” *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 24, no. 1 (2012), pp.112-129.

¹¹⁵ Theodore M. Christou, *Progressive Education: Revisioning and Reframing Ontario's Public Schools, 1991-1942* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

last half of the twentieth century.¹¹⁶ He provides detailed background on curriculum reform, school administration, and provincial policies, particularly, for the purposes of this study, on the *Living and Learning* (Hall-Dennis) report of 1968 which led to sweeping curriculum changes in the early 1970s, including the phasing out of school readers. Like Stamp, Gidney deals with larger questions of policy and finance rather than details such as changes in textbooks. *How Schools Worked* is Gidney's most recent work, in collaboration with W.P.J. Millar; drawing on archival materials, they use case studies to create a profile of Canadian public schools in the early twentieth century.¹¹⁷ Violet Parvin's *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario, 1846-1950* documents the changes in Ontario textbooks of this period.¹¹⁸ She reports on trends in education that affected the school curriculum but does not explore the contents of the readers in any depth; her main focus is on the changes in government officials and their influence in each era. Normal School Instructor E.T. White provides a brief contemporary view of the *Ontario Readers in Public School Textbooks*.¹¹⁹

Tools of the trade – maps and textbooks

In this section I return to Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen* and examine the tools used to construct the nation in the classroom, using the example of *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants* to make the case for the role of school readers in constructions of national identity. Weber explains the state's attempt to visually represent the 'intangible' nation of France by supplying materials to schoolrooms, observing that, 'it was hard work to persuade children, for all their malleability, without the panoply of material that became available only in the 1870's... Maps of France began to be supplied soon after the Franco-Prussian War, distributed by the state.'¹²⁰

Here Weber raises two important factors in constructing national identity. The first is the availability of teaching materials, the 'panoply of material.' In his chapter 'The Origins of National Consciousness', Anderson describes the role of mass communication—'print capitalism'—in constructing national identity, not only through the unification of language,

¹¹⁶ R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1999)..

¹¹⁷ R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, *How Schools Worked: Public Education in English Canada, 1900-1940* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012).

¹¹⁸ Violet Parvin, *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario, 1846-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965).

¹¹⁹ E.T. White, *Public School Text-Books in Ontario* (London: The Chas. Chapman Co., 1922).

¹²⁰ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.334.

but also in imagining the nation: 'These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community.'¹²¹ I looked at the role of print capitalism in national identity earlier in this chapter; here I just wanted to emphasise the importance of the availability of 'material' in the construction of the 'imagined community' of the nation.

The second significant element Weber introduces is the role of the map, not only as a representation of territory but also as symbol of national identity. He continues: 'First urban schools, then rural ones, were endowed with wall maps. By 1881 few classrooms, however small, appear to have lacked a map. Some, of course, "served only as ornaments."¹²² A map is a two-dimensional representation of three dimensional space; in order to understand the map the viewer must be able to imagine the space represented, not only the topography but the territory it delineates. Anderson refers to the maps as a part of the 'grammar' that helps one imagine a community, a nation, but the grammar of maps, like the grammar of language has to be learned.¹²³ Without information, training and imagination, the map is, as Weber reports, simply an ornament.

In *Space and Place*, American geographer Yi-Fu Tuan explains: 'Cartographic ability presupposes not only a talent for abstraction and symbolization on the part of the primitive cartographer but also a comparable talent in the person who looks on, for he must know how to translate wriggly lines and dots back into real terrain.'¹²⁴ The 1937 curriculum guideline, the *Programme of Studies*, recommends a process for introducing Ontario Grade Three children to maps:

Ability to understand and use the map may be gradually and informally developed by locating on the map of the world and on the globe the countries visited, and by tracing on the globe and map the route to be followed in reaching the country. Use should also be made of maps drawn on the blackboard by the teacher, and of sand-table and pictorial maps made by the pupils.¹²⁵

Weber writes that the classroom maps, 'inculcated all with the image of the national hexagon, and served as a reminder that the eastern border should not lie on the Vosges but on

¹²¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.p.44.

¹²² Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.334.

¹²³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.p.185.

¹²⁴ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).p.77.

¹²⁵ Minister of Education for Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937," (1937).p.66.

the Rhine. They were also powerful symbols, not only of the asserted fatherland, but of the abstractions young minds had to get used to.¹²⁶ Here Weber reminds us that the map is not simply a two-dimensional visual representation of a territory, but a cultural representation. In *The New Nature of Maps*, geographer J.B. Harley explores the role of cartography in defining both states and nations:

Every map contains two sets of rules. First there are the cartographers' rules, and we have seen how these operate in the technical practices of map making. The second set can be traced from society into the map, where they influence the categories of knowledge. The map becomes a "signifying system" through which "a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced, and explored." Maps do not simply reproduce a topographical reality; they also interpret it.¹²⁷

Weber also reminds us of the role of political boundaries in the construction of national identity, not only the contested boundaries of the state—'a reminder that the eastern border should not lie on the Vosges but on the Rhine'—but also the claiming of territory in opposition to or domination of other states, the 'asserted fatherland'.¹²⁸ Those inside of the boundary are French, those outside the boundary are Other. The contested nature of boundaries also speaks to the changeability and impermanence of maps.

In the brief passage quoted above, Weber refers to maps as 'abstractions young minds had to get used to.'¹²⁹ He reminds us that school lessons are frequently based upon abstractions, not simply the concrete and immediate experience of the pupil. In all subjects, from sciences to literature, children must learn to imagine other places, peoples and deal with abstract thoughts. Within the readers, for example, children are exposed not only to straightforward narratives and exposition but also to poetry, stories of other lands and fantasy. The map is simply a tool representing these abstractions.

Finally Weber presents the map as a 'powerful symbol'—the 'national hexagon'. This is directly analogous to Anderson's 'map-as-logo', a piece of a jigsaw puzzle: 'In its final form all explanatory glosses could be summarily removed: lines of longitude and latitude, place

¹²⁶ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.334.

¹²⁷ J.B. Harley, *The New Nature of Maps* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).p.45.

¹²⁸ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.334.

¹²⁹ Ibid.p.334.

names, signs for rivers, seas, and mountains, *neighbours*.¹³⁰ The outline map of the country serves to symbolise the country, not only to its citizens but also to the rest of the world.



Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-1.1 Map of the world. Dent's Canadian School Atlas.

While very few maps appear in the readers themselves, the contents are intended to be used with maps. The teachers' manuals and the *Programme of Studies* cited above continually exhort teachers to draw maps on the chalkboard and refer to wall maps and atlases in conjunction with the selections within the

readers. The map of the world found in *Dent's Canadian School Atlas* (Figure 1.1) represents the typical wall map decorating Canadian classrooms of the early- to mid-twentieth century. This wall map was almost invariably a Mercator projection, a cylindrical projection which greatly distorts Canada, making it appear considerably larger than it is. Additionally, its position top and centre, gives a great importance—Canada is the centre of the world, dwarfing the United States and Europe. Only the USSR has a larger landmass, but by dividing it into two sections its importance is effectively halved. The pale pink colour, traditionally representing the British Empire in Western cartography, also gives Canada visual prominence, not only as a part of the Commonwealth but as the biggest—and, therefore, most important—part. As Harley explains, 'As images of the world, maps are never neutral or value-free or ever completely scientific... They are a part of a persuasive discourse, and they intend to convince... Most maps speak to targeted audiences, and most employ invocations of authority, especially those produced by government, and they appeal to readerships in different ways.'¹³¹

The use of maps within the readers will be examined in Chapters Four to Six; here I simply wanted to emphasise that the readers were intended to be used with maps of both Canada and the world, and that for Canadian children, like the French pupils of Weber's

¹³⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.p.175. Emphasis in original.

¹³¹ Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*.p.37.

example, the map would be a dominant presence on the classroom wall, forming an important part of their construction of 'Canada.'

Weber explains that maps alone proved inadequate in helping children to visualise their nation: 'How difficult this latter exercise remained is suggested by a circular of 1899 announcing the distribution of engravings of "views of different French regions that will lend concreteness to the idea of the fatherland."' ¹³² This distribution of artwork to schools to add 'concreteness to the idea of the fatherland' is precisely mirrored by the National Gallery of Canada's art reproduction and distribution programme in the first half of the twentieth century, described by Canadian art historian Joyce Zemans in 'Establishing the Canon'. ¹³³ 'The National Gallery's 1927 reproduction programme focused on Canadian art and targeted the school population as its principal market.' ¹³⁴ The particular imagery that came to represent Canada for schoolchildren will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five; here it is only necessary to appreciate the similarity to the efforts of the French state education system to construct a national identity by providing 'national' artwork in school classrooms.

But pictures alone were not enough to construct the nation for French schoolchildren, to fill in the outline of the map. For children to understand the abstract nature of the nation, it needed to be made alive through stories. Weber describes the power of the narrative in visualising the nation through history textbooks: 'Little boys in country schools were fascinated by tales of past French glories.' The epic battles studied in school were transformed into games: 'Going home in the evening the boys would shout snatches of Hugo or Déroutède to each other and the valley would resound to the echoes of Waterloo. The young Auvergnats were joining the rest of France, now that the once abstract notion was taking on concrete and epic forms.' ¹³⁵

Once more, Weber raises several interesting points in a brief passage. First, he emphasises the role of stories in making the 'abstract notion' of the nation 'concrete'. He then shows that it was not sufficient for schoolboys to simply read about battles; in order to make the stories concrete, they had to re-enact them. And by taking on the roles of great military figures they not only imitated their heroes' deeds—and language and culture—but also aspired

¹³² Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.334.p.45.

¹³³ Zemans, "Establishing the Canon: Nationhood, Identity, and the National Gallery's First Reproduction Programme of Canadian Art."

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*p.183.

¹³⁵ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.334-35.

to greatness themselves—as *Frenchmen*. Weber considers that, ‘The stirring deeds of derring-do were themselves part of a transcendent theme.’¹³⁶ Here we see not only schoolboys identifying with nation’s history through re-enactment and dramatization but also through the construction of national heroes and legends, effectively Stuart Hall’s often cited ‘narrative of the nation’, which he considers essential in constructions of national identity:

First there is the *narrative of the nation*, as it is told and retold in national histories, literatures, the media and popular culture. These provide a set of stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and rituals which stand for, or *represent*, the shared experiences, sorrows, and triumphs and disasters which give meaning to the nation.¹³⁷

While the French schoolboys re-enacted the Battle of Waterloo on the way home, the school readers brought the drama into the Canadian classroom. The readers not only provide multiple selections for dramatic reading, but also numerous scripted plays, mainly illustrating incidents in Canadian history. Like the French schoolboys becoming Frenchmen by playing at being Napoleon, the Canadian school readers allow children to take on the roles of British immigrant settlers and heroes such as Mounties and bush pilots. Interestingly, the plays also allow English Canadian children the opportunity to become Other by taking on the roles of French explorers and Aboriginal peoples, as we shall see in Chapters Three to Six.

The tales of military ‘derring-do’ brought history to life and imbued the French schoolboys in the regions with a sense of being a part of a nation, but the characters they emulated were people of the past, not ordinary men but national heroes. In contrast, Julien and André, the young proponents of *Le Tour*, are contemporary role models, ‘real’ boys of similar ages to the young pupils reading about their adventures. Their language mirrored that of ordinary children, who could identify with their interests and fears. As we will see, especially in Chapters Five and Six, the school readers employ a similar strategy, constructing Canada through virtual tours across the country ‘from sea to sea’, visiting people in different regions, helping children imagine the nation of Canada.

Le Tour helped children to imagine their nation *not* through abstract maps and past historical accounts, but through contemporary children’s realistic experiences. While the countryside is central their adventures and maps and illustrations chart their route, the story

¹³⁶ Ibid.p.335.

¹³⁷ Stuart Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity," in *Modernity and Its Futures*, ed. Stuart Hall, David Held, and Tony McGrew, Understanding Modern Societies (Cambridge: Polity Press in association with The Open University, 1992).p.293. Emphasis in original.

depends upon character and plot, the boys' *interaction* with the landscape and its inhabitants. Most importantly, the people they meet populate the 'national hexagon' turning it from an abstract shape into the site of adventure and the homes of their new friends. *Le Tour* emphasises not only regional cultural differences but also the similarities, the common values and interests, and, most importantly, the common language which makes communication possible. Earlier I cited Gellner's definitions of a nation; the nation is not only defined as a shared culture, but also through the recognition of fellow citizens: 'Two men are of the same nation if and only if they *recognize* each other as belonging to the same nation.'¹³⁸ As *Le Tour* identifies 'the French' for children, the school readers teach children to identify 'Canadians'. As Weber reports:

A reading makes one wish to repeat Julien's and André's circuit, and forges strong links of sympathy for France and the people in it. The millions who pored over the book and its illustrations learned that French patriotism was a natural complement to their own: "France is a garden, the provinces are the flowers in it." And while everyone the children meet along the way sings the praise of his particular home, all agree that France includes them all.¹³⁹

Le Tour uses stories to operationalise the map and engravings, to show the places Julien and André visited and the sights they saw, the landscape they traversed, the inhabitants they met, and the different legends and customs that the boys come to recognise as comprising the nation of France. Effectively, these three elements—the landscape, inhabitants and legends of *Le Tour*—equate to the three 'institutions of power'—map, census and museum—which Anderson describes as the 'grammar' of the nation.¹⁴⁰ I have used these three categories—the landscape, inhabitants and symbols—in collecting and analysing the data within the readers, exploring how each element is used in constructing Canadian national identity

Weber reports that, 'By 1884 Bruno's *Tour de France*, published in 1877, had gone through 108 printings, and by 1900 or so, sales exceeded eight million copies.'¹⁴¹ The book is still in print today with several different editions published in the late twentieth century, with an '*édition luxe*' marking the 135th anniversary of its publication. While today the interest is largely nostalgic, the book itself evidently forms a part of the 'narrative of the nation', the national culture of France itself.

¹³⁸ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.p.7. Emphasis in original.

¹³⁹ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.pp.334-35.

¹⁴⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.pp.163-85.

¹⁴¹ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.p.335.

Weber's example of the use of schoolroom materials—the map, artwork, histories and, most importantly, the storybook, *Le Tour de la France* to help children imagine their nation, the *patrie*—provides a framework—and makes the case—for using school readers to explore constructions of Canadian national identity. This thesis will show that the readers in this study serve a similar unifying process in constructing English Canadian identity for children from 1909 to 1970.

Imagining Canada through school readers

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson introduces his concept of the role of the 'imagined community' created through print media in creating national identity. This provides a useful tool to examine constructions of national identity through Canadian school readers. Anderson demonstrates the role of the 'mass ceremony' in constructing national identity, citing the example of an 'imagined community' formed through 'the almost precisely simultaneous consumption ('imagining') of the newspaper-as-fiction... Yet each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion. Furthermore, this ceremony is incessantly repeated at daily or half-daily intervals throughout the calendar.'¹⁴²

For much of the twentieth century, Ontario children participated in the 'mass ceremony' of reading together from their school texts, but unlike Anderson's newspaper readers, they had no choice about participating in the 'imagined community' created through their readers.¹⁴³ Public school education was mandatory and schools were required to use *only* readers authorised by the Ontario Department of Education. Also, unlike Anderson's newspaper readers who could presumably choose from a variety of daily papers depending on their social class, geographic location, political leanings, budget or personal taste, Ontario children before 1950 used *precisely* the same readers regardless of location, ethnicity or social class. After 1950 school boards could choose from four very similar series of reading texts, increased during the 1960s; unlike the earlier *Ontario Readers*, these readers were used across Canada. The point here is that the readers were authorised by government, selected by officials and required to be read by all public school children—the material that created the community and bound it together was identical—and imposed.

¹⁴² Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.p.35.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*p.35.

There cannot be many examples of similar common interactions with identical media; even the most popular films, television programmes and fiction—for example, the *Harry Potter* books and films—are not guaranteed to be experienced by *all* children of a given age in a geographic region, whereas Ontario public school students used precisely the same readers regardless of location, family income or ethnicity. Private (‘independent’) schools were also required to use the approved textbooks and Roman Catholic schools in Ontario used a parallel series of authorized schoolbooks; these are outside the limits of this study but played a similar unifying role in the Catholic community.¹⁴⁴

Anderson further describes a synchronous dimension to his imagined community:

Take national anthems, for example, sung on national holidays. No matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes, there is in this singing an experience of simultaneity. At precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody... if we are aware that others are singing these songs precisely when and as we are, we have no idea who they may be, or even where, out of earshot, they are singing. Nothing connects us all but imagined sound.¹⁴⁵

In Ontario schools before the 1970s, reading was taught as a communal activity, with ‘reading aloud’ forming an important part of the daily classroom routine, especially in the younger grades. While children were also expected to read individually, both as homework and ‘silent reading’ in the classroom, the selections read individually were the subject of tests, group discussions and class projects. The very activity of reading was a part of the Ontario school and classroom community and, from the 1950s with the use of national textbooks, a part of a Canadian community. Given that before 1950 each grade used the same textbook, which was designed to be followed and completed over the school year, it would be possible to guess to within a few pages precisely which story was being read by *all* Grade Five pupils in Ontario public schools in, say, the second week of October, in any given year between 1909 and 1950.

Children not only read these books at the same time across the province and, later, across the country: the same readers were used for many years across generations. The *Ontario Readers*, published in 1909, were in use until 1937, with only minor revisions in the early 1920s. It is therefore highly probable that a child aged ten in 1909 could be teaching school herself in the early 1920s using the same readers, and that *her* pupils could be teaching with

¹⁴⁴ Roman Catholic schools are usually referred to as ‘Separate Schools’ in Ontario.

¹⁴⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.p.145

the same books in the late 1930s. Some of the post-World War II reading series also served for many years: for example, the *Canadian Reading Development* series, published in 1946, was used in Ontario schools from 1950 to 1968, providing ample opportunity for teachers to teach the same texts they had studied as pupils. Many of the same stories and poems appeared in successive generations of readers; anecdotally, my grandmother memorized ‘Indian Summer’ from the original *Ontario Readers Second Book* in 1911, my mother from the revised edition in 1936; I learned it from *Up and Away* in 1961, and my younger sister from *Under Canadian Skies* in 1968. This intergenerational experience of learning precisely the same poem from school readers over almost 60 years illustrates another dimension of the creation of an imagined community through the school readers, and introduces the readers as the creators of traditions that create a sense of national identity. Like *Le Tour*, read by French schoolchildren across multiple generations, the readers in this study become part of the ‘narrative of the nation’.¹⁴⁶

The reader was not only a tool that created an imaginary community for children through reading the same materials, often at precisely the same time, it also introduced children to identical concepts of ‘Canada’ by picturing for them the physical appearance of the country, describing the characteristics of its inhabitants and their activities, creating a shared history, of traditions, symbols and legends. The use of these three elements—the landscape, its inhabitants and symbols in constructing Canadian national identity—form the framework for Chapters Three to Six.

*‘To instil ‘a love of Canada’ – school readers 1909-1970*¹⁴⁷

This thesis examines constructions of English Canadian identity in readers used in Ontario public schools by children aged eight to twelve between 1909 and 1970. The readers are anthologies of prose, poetry and plays used to teach young children to read, to improve older children’s reading comprehension and vocabulary, and to expose them to a wide variety of literature. Additionally, the readers used in Ontario public schools from 1950 to 1970 had the stated purpose of teaching children about their country and instilling a ‘love of Canada.’¹⁴⁸ The readers are supported by teachers’ manuals. These are invaluable because they explain, often in considerable detail, the editors’ reasons for the inclusion of materials and their

¹⁴⁶ Hall, “The Question of Cultural Identity.”p.293.

¹⁴⁷ Fred C. Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*, ed. J. Ranton McIntosh, Canadian Reading Development Series (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Co. Limited, 1948).p.1.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.p.1.

intended use in the classroom. The manuals accompanying the readers approved for use in Ontario from 1950 particularly detailed in intentions of construction of Canadian identity.

While historians José Igartua and Daniel Francis, among others, have written on Canadian identity in schoolbooks, especially history texts, there is no published material on constructions of Canadian national identity in elementary school readers, including those in this study.¹⁴⁹ Yet for most of the twentieth century it is from these readers that Canadian children received their first official introduction to ‘Canada’ and learned what ‘being Canadian’ meant. The stories, poems and descriptions within these readers—and the illustrations—would colour children’s ideas of Canada in their later, more formal studies of history, geography and civics, especially in the years before the widespread availability of Canadian television programming.

This work contributes to Canadian identity studies, in addition to the growing field of Canadian educational history and curriculum. It also informs studies in political and social sciences on the role of education in constructing national identity. While high school history books have often been referenced in studies of Canadian society and readers have been used in national identity studies outside Canada, the readers used in Ontario Grades Four to Six between 1909 and 1970 have not been the subject of any published work on Canadian national identity. Likewise, these school readers have been ignored in studies of Canadian children’s illustrated books, particularly the otherwise comprehensive *Picturing Canada* although school readers are the only illustrated books *all* Canadian children will have read, and the illustrators include some of Canada’s best-known artists of the twentieth century. The teachers’ manuals have also not been the subject of any published study, although they contribute not only to Canadian national identity but the history of Canadian education, particularly curriculum development.

The readers in this study formed children’s official introduction to Canada. Canadian history was not taught formally until Grade Six, by which time children had been exposed to several years of stories and images of their country through their readers.¹⁵⁰ The stories, poems and non-fiction selections in the readers would inevitably colour children’s later learning about their country. Unlike storybooks or, later, television programmes, the readers were *official*

¹⁴⁹ Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71.*, Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History.*

¹⁵⁰ Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937."

publications; their covers were stamped as ‘authorized’ by the provincial government, and therefore represented an official view of Canada for children. The children whose first impressions of Canada were constructed through these readers have been—and continue to be—Canada’s decision makers throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first; the ten-year-olds of 1970, the last year in this study, are in their mid-fifties today and continue to play an influential role in the nation.

Chapter 2 Methods

My research question is: How is Canadian national identity constructed in the readers used in Grades Four to Six in Ontario from 1909 to 1970? What are the main themes? How does Canadian identity change over time? This chapter reviews my data collection methods, the acquisition and selection of materials, ethical considerations, my choice of research strategies and the method used in analysing the data in order to answer the research question.

This research project evolved from an interest in constructions of wilderness in children's media, leading to the selection of school textbooks as a stable and clearly defined set of data. Unlike storybooks and television programmes, *all* Ontario public school children would have read their school textbooks, making these documents particularly useful for studying social values. In *Content Analysis*, Klaus Krippendorff observes, 'Text-driven content analyses are motivated by the availability of texts rich enough to stimulate the analysts' interests in them. As the research questions emerge, as analysts are becoming involved with such texts, text-driven analyses are also called "fishing expeditions."'”¹⁵¹ This project was originally text-driven, arising from my realisation that the school readers were a largely untapped rich source of data reflecting Canadian social values of the early to mid-twentieth century.

As my study progressed I realised that 'wilderness' was only a subset of the larger construct of Canadian national identity and revised my research question, expanding my data set to include texts constructing Canadian identity and to consider the larger question of the role of education in constructing national identity.

This project is a longitudinal study, exploring constructions of Canadian national identity in Ontario public school readers from 1909 to 1970. Chapters 3 to 6 each cover a single era of this period, determined by government reports which led to changes in textbooks. These reports are examined at the beginning of each chapter, along with a brief appreciation of the social and political climate and pedagogy of the day. It is also a thematic study, in that each chapter presents the analysis revealing the emerging metanarratives representative of twentieth-century English Canadian identity.

¹⁵¹ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, Second Edition ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc., 2004).p.340.

I begin with a discussion of my choice of method followed by the process of collecting the data and a brief appreciation of the textbooks as documents with multiple meanings. This is followed by a description of the qualitative study of the data through content analysis, concluding with my ethical considerations for this project. Samples of the charts used in my analysis are provided in Appendix II.

Choice of Method

This thesis explores constructions of Canadian identity in the readers approved for use in Ontario public schools between 1909 and 1970. My research is specifically concerned with the contents of these documents, not their reception and use. If my research involved the effect of contemporary schoolbooks on large segments of the population or particular demographics, then surveys, questionnaires and focus groups would be appropriate research methods, and if I were to examine the use of particular textbooks in a classroom setting, an ethnographic study or interviews with teachers and students might be indicated, as well as an analysis of the design and creation of the particular schoolbooks.

Over forty years have passed since the last readers in my study were withdrawn from use in Ontario classrooms, and it is not possible to determine with any scientific accuracy how Ontario children—and their teachers—received these books and how the contents affected their constructions of Canadian identity. After this length of time, memories are bound to be coloured by the events and experiences of the intervening years. For example, on hearing about my research several friends reminisced about the strong conservation message they remember from their Ontario elementary school readers. As my examination of the texts proves, the topic was not an important theme within the readers, so the friends *must* have received their awareness of environmental issues from other sources than these textbooks. Correspondingly, Patrice Milewski has produced a very revealing oral history based on teachers' recollections of the *Programme of Studies*, the document that prescribed the Ontario curriculum from 1937.¹⁵² While the teachers *must* have been familiar with 'The Little Grey Book' as it was popularly known—the document was intended to be used by teachers on a regular basis—most of the teachers he interviewed have no clear recollection of the document, nor does it seem to have affected their teaching.

¹⁵² Milewski, "'I Paid No Attention to It': An Oral History of Curricular Change in the 1930s."

Rather than pursuing nostalgic interviews, interesting in their own right, it seemed more useful to limit research to the documents themselves, the textbooks and their contents. In *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*, Ole R. Holsti observes that, 'Such research presents the fewest problems of influence because validity does not require comparison with data outside those under analysis; the research question can be answered directly from a description of communication content.'¹⁵³ In my analysis, I have included support materials including teachers' manuals designed to accompany the readers, the government documents regulating textbooks in Ontario schools and related reports.

Document collection

The documents in this study are school textbooks either published by or, after 1937, authorised by the Department of Education (later the Ministry of Education) of the Province of Ontario between 1909 and 1970. A common curriculum was established during the 1850s and standardized textbooks were approved for use throughout the province; schools not using the authorised textbooks could be denied funding. I have limited my research to readers designed for children ages eight to twelve in Grades Three to Six (formerly Forms II and III) prior to the 1950-51 school year, and Grades Four, Five and Six from 1950-51 to 1970.

Each of the *Ontario Readers* used from 1909 to 1936 covered two school years and it is most practical to cover *Books Two* and *Three* in their entirety. The sets of elementary readers approved after 1950 were produced in sets for 'Primary' (Grades One to Three), 'Junior' (Grades Four to Six) and 'Middle' (Grades Seven and Eight), matching the structure imposed by the Department of Education.¹⁵⁴ The readers designed for Grades One and Two (Grades One to Three after 1950) focussed entirely on teaching children basic reading skills and children did not advance until these skills were mastered. The contents of the Primary readers reflect this, with simple sentences and short stories with little content. Importantly, the main Primary series approved in Ontario from the 1930s to 1958 were American publications adapted for Canadian schools, employing Canadian spelling, but otherwise identical to their American counterparts. The readers for the Junior Grades were designed for

¹⁵³ Ole R Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Reading MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969).p.67.

¹⁵⁴ Royal Commission on Education Ontario, "Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, 1950," (Toronto 1950).

independent readers. In addition to extracts and adaptations from classics of literature, they include purpose-written materials and were designed so that children would cover most, if not all, of the material over the school year. In contrast, the readers for Grades Seven and Eight were dense anthologies of English Literature, with more selections than could reasonably be covered in a school year. Teachers for this age group had considerable latitude in which selections were studied. There was little communal reading; most material was studied individually as homework for in-class discussion and essays.

I have chosen to focus on the readers for the Junior grades because they were designed to be of interest to children who had mastered basic reading skills, they included considerable purpose-written material and were produced entirely by Canadians, with many selections contributed by Canadian schoolteachers and writers. Additionally, unlike the Primary books whose sole purpose was to teach basic skills and the Middle readers which provide literary classics for criticism and analysis, the Junior readers, especially those used after 1950, have the express purpose of creating an interest in Canada.

Examples of all of these books are housed in a single location. The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), now part of the University of Toronto, holds two significant collections of materials used in education. As described on the University of Toronto library website, the Textbook Collection, 'includes elementary and secondary school texts authorized or approved for use in Ontario circa 1846 to 1970, as well as some materials used in nineteenth-century schools but not approved by the Ontario Department of Education.'¹⁵⁵ The time period for my research project was first suggested by the 1970 final date of this archives; the specific end date implied that highly significant changes in education occurred in that year. The Historical Education Collection 'includes numerous documents, mainly from the Ontario Ministry of Education, formerly the Ontario Dept. of Education, that cover the areas of elementary, secondary and teacher education in the Province from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day.'¹⁵⁶ The collections are accessible to researchers by appointment and the holdings are listed in the university's online catalogue.

I first visited the OISE library in January, 2010 order to meet librarian Kathy Imrie, gain an appreciation of the collections and plan my research. For practical purposes, the two

¹⁵⁵ University of Toronto, "Ontario Textbook Collection,"
<http://oise.library.utoronto.ca/specialcollections-ontario-textbook>.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

collections can be considered as a single unit as they are housed in the same secure space in the purpose-built climate-controlled library and operated under the same guidelines. Both collections are considered ‘complete’; presumably authenticated documents pertaining to the history of education in Ontario would be accepted into The Historical Education Collection, but I did not receive the impression that materials were being actively sought.

Bryman cites four ‘extremely rigorous’ criteria in the selection of documents as research data. These are:

1. *Authenticity*. Is the evidence genuine and of unquestionable origin?
2. *Credibility*. Is the evidence free from error and distortion?
3. *Representativeness*. Is the evidence typical of its kind and if not, is the extent of typicality known?
4. *Meaning*. Is the evidence clear and comprehensible?¹⁵⁷

There is no reason to question the authenticity, credibility or representativeness of the textbooks in the collection. The provenance of the materials is well-documented. The systematic collection of authorized schoolbooks began in the 1850s and continues to the present. Kathy Imrie explained that both collections had been transferred intact from the Ministry of Education in 1970, following the construction of the OISE building. Subsequently, a few books missing from the original collections were acquired and the catalogues revised and updated; otherwise no changes have taken place. Books authorized for use in Ontario schools after 1970 are housed in the ‘Circular 14’ open reference section adjacent to the collections, along with associated pedagogical materials; books removed from the curriculum are housed in a secure section adjacent to the Historical Education Collection. ‘Supporting this Collection are other holdings of textbooks, including post-1970 texts deleted from the approval lists.’¹⁵⁸ While a catalogue of the Textbook Collection was created in 1982, this is only available on microfiche at the archives and is therefore of limited value to researchers today. Materials in the Collection are fully catalogued in the main University of Toronto catalogue.

The stated purpose of the original collection was to include all schoolbooks authorized for use in Ontario since the inception of public education in the Province. While the collections are part of the University of Toronto’s Rare Book Collection,

¹⁵⁷ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, Third Edition ed. (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).p.516. Emphasis in original.

¹⁵⁸ Toronto, "Ontario Textbook Collection".

their real value lies in the completeness of the collections and availability of ancillary materials; the books themselves were printed by the thousands and most are available in other in other collections, including the National Archives of Canada and provincial collections. collections. After 1950, elementary school readers were purchased by the school boards, rather boards, rather than individuals. The boards disposed of outdated books and some titles can be can be difficult for collectors to acquire. Additionally, the collection holds very few examples of the workbooks that accompanied the reading series. While printed by the thousands, these workbooks were designed to be used by individual students on a daily basis and at the end of the school year they would be discarded.

Relatively few copies of the teachers' manuals to accompany the textbooks were printed and the Textbook Collection does not have examples of all the manuals for each of the reading series used after 1950. During the course of my research I discovered that at least three teacher's manuals listed in the University of Toronto catalogue as present in the stacks were, in fact, not to be found within the library and there was no record of their recent use. The catalogue has been corrected.

The archives serves to authenticate and define the textbooks used in Ontario schools as opposed to textbooks used in other provinces, especially in the first half of the twentieth century. Additionally, it provides the Canadian versions of American textbooks that were adapted and approved for use in Ontario, including well-known primary readers such as the Row, Peterson and Company's *Alice and Jerry* series and the Elston-Grey *Dick and Jane* series.

Today the primary responsibilities of the Textbook Collection archivist are conservation and preservation and making the collection available to researchers. New materials would only be acquired to replace damaged materials or to complete the collection, technical procedures that do not require moral or ethical judgment. Similarly, the only reason to discard materials would be condition, that is, if a particular book was discovered to be contaminating or damaging others due to mold or infestation. As none of the textbooks were unique and multiple copies were printed, replacing materials that have to be discarded should be possible, although, as noted above, some books may be difficult to find or expensive to purchase.

In recent years, out-of-copyright materials have been scanned as part of the University of Toronto's ongoing digitization project; before one of my visits the archivist checked that I did not need to consult several titles that were in the process of being scanned. This digitization project makes the extremely fragile nineteenth-century books within the collection accessible to researchers while preserving the originals and makes the materials available to researchers without the need to visit the archives in person. The materials are available through the *Internet Archive* website in addition to the University of Toronto catalogue.

Archivist Kathie Imrie regularly deals with numerous queries from researchers on a variety of subjects and her familiarity with the Textbook Collection is invaluable. While I initially enjoyed a nostalgic wallow through the readers of my childhood, she repeatedly drew my attention to dull-looking documents I might easily have ignored, especially the *Programme of Studies*, the document which governed Ontario public school curriculum from 1937, and also *Circular 14*, the document specifying which textbooks were approved for use in Ontario schools in any given year—and also their prices. Without her advice—and instance upon the vital role of these documents in the history of public education in Ontario—I would likely not have realized their value. She also alerted me to Violet Parvin's *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario 1846-1950*, the only comprehensive work on these textbooks to date.

I have had an interest in school textbooks for many years, so already owned copies of many of the readers in this study. Because it was not feasible to have continual access to the archives in Toronto, I extended my personal collection and acquired the remaining titles. The readers in my study comprise 39 individual titles and most of the books weigh in excess of 2.2 kilograms. To avoid transporting readers each time I moved between the University of Edinburgh and my home in Northern Ontario, I decided to create digital scans of the contents of each book. At this stage I had not examined all the books in detail and did not know precisely which selections would be included in my research so it was simpler to scan the entire book.

Each pair of pages was scanned in Portable Document Format (PDF). These files are digital images of each page and are not searchable. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) scans, which convert pages to searchable documents, take much

longer and require greater care and precision in the scanning process. If pages are not perfectly positioned when scanned, distortions can lead to considerable errors, including text appearing jumbled and out-of-order, transposed letters and incorrect words, many of which would not be detected by spell-checkers.

I quickly realised that I would have to examine each text in considerable detail in order to determine, first, its relevance to my research and, second, its category (or categories). Simply searching for ‘Canada’ would not locate most of the selections which include strong elements of Canadian national identity; likewise, while wilderness is a dominant theme in Canadian identity, the word ‘wilderness’ does not appear at all in several of the readers—nor does ‘multiculturalism’. Additionally, the documents are not simply a collection of words; the position of a text within the reader and the accompanying illustrations are just as important in determining its meaning. The primary purpose of using OCR is to search for particular words within a text; I decided that because I was not simply searching for particular words, OCR scanning, proofreading and subsequent analysis using various software programmes was simply not worth the time and resources.

After I had determined which selections within the readers would be included in my data set, I was permitted to scan sections of the teachers’ manuals in the OISE Textbook Collection. These included the introductions, in addition to the pages relating to the selections on Canada. While it was not possible for me to visit the National Archives in Ottawa to personally examine their copies of the three 1960s teachers’ manuals missing from the OISE Textbook Collection, a colleague kindly photographed several sections and saved the images as grey scale JPGs. I determined the pages to photograph based upon the selections within the readers that seemed most relevant to constructions of Canadian identity. I also scanned the sections relating to the elementary school readers in the multiple copies of *The Programme of Studies* and *Circular 14* in the OISE Textbook Collection.

The advantage of having the data in digital format is that I can refer to the readers at any time on a computer or iPad. I can readily enlarge the almost microscopic text used in the ‘Acknowledgements’ sections of most readers and enhance the contrast on the faded pages of the oldest readers. The primary disadvantage is that I cannot look at and compare multiple volumes at the same time, as one could with the textbooks themselves. This is particularly irritating when comparing the teachers’ manuals and the readers and while the *GoodReader*

‘app’ I use is eminently satisfactory in most ways, I find that bookmarking electronic files is simply not as efficient as sticking a post-it note on the page.

Documents with multiple meanings

The history, purpose, appearance and contents of each set of readers is examined in detail in Chapters Three to Six. Here I will simply summarise key points about the textbooks as documents. Earlier I discussed the readers as documents, using the first three of Bryman’s criteria: authenticity, credibility and representativeness. Bryman’s fourth criteria for the selection of documents is ‘meaning’: ‘Is the meaning clear?’¹⁵⁹ The readers are documents with multiple meanings, although their primary purpose, to improve children’s reading comprehension and expose them to a variety of English literature, seems clear enough. Each reader is an illustrated anthology comprising prose (fiction and non-fiction), poetry and plays, arranged mainly thematically but also with attention to reading difficulty. Most of the individual texts—documents in their own right—within these anthologies were created for entirely different and disparate purposes, for example, it is unlikely that Robert Louis Stevenson and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote their poems with a view to having them serve as reading and analysis exercises for twentieth-century Ontario schoolchildren. Readers published in the 1950s and 1960s, contain more original material written specifically to encompass curriculum goals, but these are still outweighed by materials created for other purposes.

The selections themselves are intended to be read by children between ages eight and twelve, and were carefully chosen for vocabulary suitable to those ages. Overall, the texts are simple and realistic, with few literary devices, with the exception of some of the poetry. The selections are intended to be taken literally, and ‘tall tales’, humour and fantasy are clearly designated as such. Thus the meaning of the texts can be considered clear, although many of the texts appear in a different context to their original purpose. The teachers’ manuals provide valuable clues about the editors’ intentions in including the individual texts within the readers, and their anticipated presentation in the classroom. It is important to reiterate that the textbooks reflect not only the stated curriculum objectives but also the social views of their times, and, in the readers used from 1950 to 1970, teaching children about Canada and developing a sense of Canadian national identity.

¹⁵⁹ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*.p.516.

Content Analysis

Klaus Krippendorff observes that, ‘Written text is not just a collection of words; rather it is sequenced discourse, a network of narratives that can be read variously.’¹⁶⁰ Because the documents—the readers—are primarily text, I have chosen to use content analysis, which Robert Weber defines as ‘a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. These inferences are about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message.’¹⁶¹ In comparing the benefits of content analysis over other methods, Weber points out that, ‘Content-analytic procedures operate directly on text or transcripts of human communications.’¹⁶² The readers are a form of communication, reflective not only of pedagogical aims, but also the culture of their times. Weber further states that the ‘Culture indicators generated from such series of documents constitute reliable data that may span even centuries.’¹⁶³ The readers constitute a stable form of data, fixed in time; within each period the books were presented unaltered to schoolchildren. Because they are both stable and official communications, they can be considered a highly reliable source of data.

In *Social Research Methods*, Alan Bryman reflects that content analysis is ‘probably the most prevalent approach to the qualitative analysis of documents’... comprising ‘a searching out of underlying themes in the materials being analysed.’¹⁶⁴ Examples of content analysis in studies of Canadian national identity include Sherrill E. Grace’s *Canada and the Idea of North*, particularly ‘Part Three: Narrating a Northern Nation’; Eva Mackey’s *The House of Difference*; and Daniel Francis’ *National Dreams*, while historian José Igartua relies on the content analysis of newspapers and history textbooks in his examination of constructions of English Canadian identity.¹⁶⁵ Amy von Heyking also uses content analysis in *Creating Citizens*, her study of regional identity in Alberta school texts. Examples of content analysis as the method chosen to explore representations of national identity in school textbooks include Jane McGennissen’s examination of pioneer imagery in Australian school

¹⁶⁰ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.63.

¹⁶¹ Robert Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, (Thousand Oaks CA: SAGE Publications Inc., 1990), <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.is.ed.ac.uk/10.4135/9781412983488.p.9>.

¹⁶² *Ibid*.p.10.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*.p.10.

¹⁶⁴ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*.p.529.

¹⁶⁵ Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71*.pp.9-12.

readers and Lyn Parker's study of schoolbooks in Bali, among others.¹⁶⁶ In *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*, Ole Holsti cites the 1962 article by deCharms and Moeller, as an example of a highly detailed content analysis of textbooks; their project examined relationships between 'achievement imagery' and 'moral imagery' in American school readers from 1800 to 1950, relating both to patent applications.¹⁶⁷

Bryman stresses the importance of objectivity and being systematic, citing definition: 'Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages.'¹⁶⁸ Weber and also emphasise the importance of being objective and systematic in when designing a content analysis. Additionally, the analysis must be replicable and lacking in bias.

Weber outlines the process of creating and testing a coding scheme, beginning with defining the recording units, that is, the units of text to be classified, followed by defining categories.¹⁶⁹ Krippendorff identifies recording units as 'units of description that collectively bear the information that content analysts process and provide the basis for statistical accounts.'¹⁷⁰ Using both Weber and Krippendorff's definitions, for this project the 'recording units' are the items of text—prose, poetry and plays—within the individual readers.

Initially I was examining constructions of wilderness, so identified all the selections that might conceivably contain text or illustrations pertaining to wilderness. When I revised my research question to focus on constructions of Canadian national identity, some of these units were eliminated and others added. For example, the readers contain numerous stories about wild animals in wilderness settings. The animal stories with no specific Canadian location, no human interaction, where the

¹⁶⁶ Guichard, "The Indian Nation and Selective Amnesia: Representing Conflicts and Violence in Indian History Textbooks."; Parker, "The Subjectification of Citizenship: Student Interpretations of School Teachings in Bali."; Ram, "The Immemorial Iranian Nation? School Texts and Historical Memory in Post-Revolutionary Iran."; Haigh, "Making Ukrainians in the Library: Language, Libraries, and National Identity."; McGennissen, "Huts in the Wilderness: Pioneering in School Readers."

¹⁶⁷ Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*., Richard deCharms and Gerald Moeller, "Values Expressed in American Children's Readers: 1800-1950," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 64, no. 2 (1962).

¹⁶⁸ Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*.p.14.

¹⁶⁹ Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*.pp.21-24

¹⁷⁰ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.103.

animals are not identified as symbols of Canada or associated with particular Canadian mythology were discarded. Others selections were added; for example, initially I had not included selections dealing with farming or urban life; these were now included, along with patriotic poems and selections on multiculturalism.

Because the documents were created by multiple authors for very different purposes, I realised that using computer software in conducting a content analysis would be of little or no help in this particular study, although this technology would be of considerable use in identifying the occurrences of particular words, phrases and relationships in a more in-depth study of particular themes within a smaller number of texts within the readers, or a single reader. Not only do the large number of texts include many confusing terms, such as 'Indian' used to mean both First Nations and also residents of South Asia, or 'lion' and 'puma' to mean 'cougar' but also the variety of ways in which elements of national identity are constructed within the texts are context-specific.

Selecting the texts for inclusion in the project was a more complex operation than a simple search for the word 'Canada.' For example, the words 'Canada' and 'Canadian' appear in only five titles of the seventy-seven selections comprising the nine units in *Under the North Star* (1958), all patriotic poems, and yet twenty-five of the seventy-seven selections can be considered to have Canadian settings or themes. Only thirteen of these are placed in 'Old Tales of Canada' and 'The Land We Love' units; the remainder are scattered throughout the book. Throughout the readers, stories with elements of Canadian identity may be found in diverse units including 'Far Off Lands'; some of these are set in the Canadian Arctic and several stories set on other continents include comparisons to Canada, with Canadian children visiting other parts of the world. These could not be detected simply with a computer word search, but required close examination of each reader.

Krippendorff distinguishes between 'the *development* of a content analysis, during which a design emerges that possess context-sensitive specificity, and the *execution* of a content analysis during which the design is relatively fixed and ideally replicable, regardless of what the texts could teach the analysis.'¹⁷¹ This development stage included the creation of what Krippendorff refers to as 'context units': 'units that delineate the scope of information that coders need to consult in characterizing the recording units.'¹⁷² Here Weber and Holsti

¹⁷¹ Ibid.p.87. Emphasis in original.

¹⁷² Ibid.p.103.

use the term ‘categories’ and I have adopted his terminology in describing my efforts to categorise the texts using concepts that relate to national identity.

Holsti believes that, ‘The most important requirement of categories is that they must adequately *reflect the investigator’s research question*.’¹⁷³ In my development of categories for examining constructions of Canadian national identity within the readers, I began by considering general ways of talking about a nation. For example, one might first consider the physical characteristics that define the nation, its political boundaries and topography. This became the ‘landscape’ category. One might also consider the nation’s citizens, how do they define themselves and Others; this led to the ‘inhabitants’ category, similar to the ‘significant actors’ category suggested by Bryman.¹⁷⁴ Literature on national identity emphasises the key role of symbols and legends, for example Stuart Hall’s ‘narration of nation’ and Hobsbawm and Ranger’s *Invention of Tradition*, in constructing national identity; these are represented by the ‘symbols and myths’ category.¹⁷⁵ These three categories can be seen as encompassing *all* constructions of Canadian identity within the readers, that is, there is no text or illustration that does not fit in some way. They are not mutually exclusive; that is, a particular text may appear in all three categories. But by examining the texts within these categories, patterns emerge; for example, the absence of cities in the ‘landscape’ category. In Chapters Three to Six, the three categories of ‘Symbols and Myths’, ‘Landscape’ and ‘Inhabitants’ provide the framework for analysing changing constructions of Canadian national identity within the readers over the timeframe of the study. Later in the process, additional categories were added as I realised that both ‘time’ and ‘activity’ were highly significant factors in constructions of Canadian identity, characteristic of a ‘modern’ nation. A more technical category, ‘repeat’, records the number of times a particular text appeared across multiple readers; this reflects the relative importance of a particular text in the eyes of the editors and its influence over time.

Weber points out that, ‘The central problems of content analysis originate mainly in the data-reduction process by which the many words of texts are classified into much fewer content categories.’¹⁷⁶ Within my general categories, I then identified

¹⁷³ Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*.p.95. Emphasis in original.

¹⁷⁴ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*.p.280.

¹⁷⁵ Hall, "The Future of Identity.", Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*.

¹⁷⁶ Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*.p.15.

particular themes and created coded abbreviations (Appendix II). These again are *not* mutually exclusive, for example, a story of French trappers might also include Aboriginal guides, British settlers—and their dogs. However, these served to identify the dominant themes within the main categories, for example the dominance of ‘pioneers’ in the ‘inhabitants’ category and the ‘Canadian Shield’ landscape.

Bryman considers that, ‘Content analysis is firmly rooted in the quantitative research strategy in that the aim is to produce quantitative accounts of the raw material in terms of the categories specified by the rules. The feature of quantification adds to the general sense of the systematic and objective application of neutral rules.’¹⁷⁷ Krippendorff takes a somewhat different approach, asserting that, ‘Counting is an operation performed on a body of text. Its result says nothing other than that somebody has counted something.’¹⁷⁸ For the purpose of this research project, I have found that a certain degree of quantification is useful not only in being able to identify trends, but also to draw inferences and speak authoritatively. For example, when examining constructions of national identity, it is helpful to be able to state categorically that eighty-four percent of the stories set in the Canadian wilderness have an element of ‘survival’, or that all but one of the seven Grade Six readers include a selection on resource extraction. A number or percentage makes a more convincing statement than ‘many’ or ‘some’ and indicates a more objective and systematic approach, with less authorial bias; therefore throughout this analysis I have frequently ‘counted something’.

In this project, both quantitative and qualitative approaches proved helpful in evaluating data, particularly contradictory texts. For example, a single selection which seems to be denigrating the Inuit people is, firstly, but one compared to over forty selections which position the Inuit positively. Secondly, it appears in a single reader that was used for only eight years, thus its influence would be less than a story which appeared in multiple readers or in a series that was used for twenty-four years. A more context-sensitive examination further reveals that the selection is included in the ‘Just For Fun’ unit; this implies that it is not to be taken seriously.

Content analysis often involves sampling a limited number of texts and then generalising findings; as Holsti observes, ‘The initial impetus for sampling may be the very practical requirement of reducing the volume of data to manageable proportions, but sampling

¹⁷⁷ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*.p.274.

¹⁷⁸ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.344.

is not simply a process of data reduction.¹⁷⁹ Krippendorff describes numerous methods of sampling, noting that most generally can be used ‘without significant reading or analysis of the sampled texts.’¹⁸⁰ However, he also states that, ‘Texts must be sampled in view of what they mean, the interpretations they enable, and the information they contain. Thus content analysts have to sample their texts to give their research questions a fair chance of being answered correctly.’¹⁸¹ The nature of the texts being analysed precludes the generally accepted methods of statistical sampling, therefore I used relevance sampling. Krippendorff reports that, ‘When using relevance sampling, analysts proceed by actually examining the texts to be analyzed, even if only superficially, often in a multistage process.’¹⁸² Krippendorff continues:

Relevance sampling is not probabilistic. In using this form of sampling, an analyst proceeds by following a conceptual hierarchy, systematically lowering the number of units that need to be considered for an analysis. The resulting units of text are not meant to be representative of a population of texts; rather they are the population of relevant texts, excluding the textual units that do not possess relevant information.¹⁸³

Thus in my analysis of farming stories in the 1950s readers, I examined each text featuring farms and selected only those which relate in some way to Canadian national identity for further analysis.

Holsti considers that ‘If research is to satisfy the requirement of objectivity, measures and procedures must be reliable; i.e., repeated measures with the same instrument on a given sample of data should yield similar results.’¹⁸⁴ Both Holsti and Krippendorff stress that reliability is, at least in part, a function of the coder’s skill and experience. Krippendorff writes extensively about the qualifications of coders, their cognitive abilities and training: ‘*Familiarity* denotes an understanding that coders must bring to a content analysis. But the sharing of similar *backgrounds*—similar histories of involvement with texts, similar education, and similar social sensitivities—is what aids reliability.’¹⁸⁵ For example, a degree of knowledge of Canadian geography is required to identify both real place names such as Moose River, Nipigon or Algonquin Park, as well as more general locations such as ‘the cedar

¹⁷⁹ Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*.p.128.

¹⁸⁰ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.118.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.p.113.

¹⁸² Ibid.p.119.

¹⁸³ Ibid.p.119.

¹⁸⁴ Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*.p.136.

¹⁸⁵ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.128. Emphasis in original.

swamp'. Numerous stories are set in the Canadian wilderness without the word 'wilderness' identifying the location. Familiarity is also required to recognise the tropes associated with Canadian national identity, the symbols and iconography; for example, the imagery of the Group of Seven which is mimicked in some illustrations.

It is also important to be able to recognise and discard texts which *do not* speak to speak to Canadian national identity. Earlier I referred to stories about wild animals identified as constructing wilderness but not Canadian identity. Another example is 'The Championship Game', a selection in *Wide Open Windows*, which, one could infer, based upon its location in the 'Young Citizens of Canada' unit, might be representative of Canadian identity. The story is about a baseball game and several illustrations feature white picket fences; while baseball is played in Canada and white picket fences can be seen, both are considered emblematic of American, not Canadian, culture. Close examination reveals that the story is an extract from a popular American storybook and the teachers' manual makes it clear that the purpose of the story is *citizenship*: 'loyalty to the team'.¹⁸⁶ This story is *not* particularly representative of Canadian national identity but of the more universal qualities of good citizenship and similar instances appear throughout the readers.¹⁸⁷

I was the sole researcher on this project and did not need to recruit and train additional coders of similar experience and cultural background, nor to conduct the tests needed to ensure that the coding methods were clear and that the definitions of each category were unambiguous. Bryman reflects on the transparency of the process 'assigning the raw material to categories, so that the analyst's personal biases intrude as little as possible in the process...The quality of being systematic means that the application of rules is done in a consistent manner so that bias is again repressed.'¹⁸⁸ Working as an individual researcher I was probably less systematic and rigorous in my coding practices than I would be when working with a team. However, I had the luxury of being able to revisit the data numerous times and examining it for subtleties; this would not have been feasible when paying assistants. Overall, given the relatively simple and unambiguous nature of the categories and coding, I believe that another researcher would produce very similar findings on examining the same data.

¹⁸⁶ Barrett, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*.p.22.

¹⁸⁷ An examination of examples of American texts used to represent Canadian identity within the readers would be a possible subject for further research.

¹⁸⁸ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*.p.274.

The abductive strategy – drawing inferences, making comparisons

Krippendorff states: ‘Abductive inferences proceed across logically distinct domains, from particulars of one kind to particulars of another kind.’¹⁸⁹ Among the main indices used in mass communication research, Krippendorff reports that, ‘The *frequency* with which a symbol, idea, reference, or topic occurs in a stream of messages is taken to indicate the *importance of, attention to, or emphasis on* that symbol, idea, reference, or topic in the messages.’¹⁹⁰ Holsti considers that frequency ‘may in fact be a valid premise, but there is also ample evidence that measures other than frequency may in some instances prove more useful.’¹⁹¹

Here I would add two additional indices – the location or prominence of a selection within the readers and the activities associated with it both increase its importance. For example, while stories about pioneers building homes in the Canadian wilderness appear in each era of readers, they are particularly dominant in the 1950s readers, with each of the twelve readers including at least one such selection. Additionally, the ‘pioneer’ selections comprise not only informational items, fiction and poetry, but also plays, crafts, songs and other immersive activities, encouraging children to ‘play pioneer’ that is, take on the identity of the settler ‘ancestors’. Here it is not only the frequency (number of occurrences) and dominance (position within readers and size of related illustrations) of these selections but also the *activities* associated with these selections that suggests their relative importance in constructing Canadian national identity, especially when compared to other materials within the same textbooks.

Similarly, I infer the importance of representations of Canada as a multicultural society not simply by the number of stories about New Canadians but also by the numerous prominent illustrations showing children of many ethnicities against a Canadian background, frequently a map. Krippendorff observes that content analysts are in a ‘position of having to draw inferences about phenomena that are not directly observable, and they are often equally resourceful in using a mixture of statistical knowledge, theory, experience, and intuition in answer to their research questions from available texts.’¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.36.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.p.59. Italics in original.

¹⁹¹ Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*.p.6.

¹⁹² Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.38.

The content analysis method permits ready comparisons both within the texts themselves or when compared to other data. In the first instance, comparing references to Canada and Britain in the *Ontario Readers* from 1909 to 1937, shows that Canada is constructed as 'young' and 'may be great' in the future, while Britain is 'beautiful' and a 'great nation'. This comparison suggests, among other things, not only a privileging of British culture but also a possible lack of confidence in Canada's future.

An example of the second instance, drawing comparisons with data, is the study by deCharm and Moeller cited earlier; their study compares the instances of 'achievement imagery' found in textbooks and numbers of patent applications.¹⁹³ Similarly, I draw comparisons between the population of Canada as depicted in the readers and the demographic information provided in the census. For example, less than ten percent of the selections set in Canada can be identified as 'urban'; in comparison, Canadian census data identifies that in 1911, 53 percent the population of Ontario lived in urban locations, increasing to 82 percent by 1971.¹⁹⁴ This may indicate a strong anti-urban bias on the part of educators who created the textbooks or it may indicate a lack of suitable material set in urban locations for children aged eight to twelve.

Krippendorff observes that, 'Because identifications are often obvious, it is easy to overlook their inferential nature.'¹⁹⁵ Within the school readers it is easy to overlook the most obvious identification of the authorial voice, that 'we' means Canadian citizens of British settler origins. Thus everyone who does not share this ethnicity is immediately identified as Other. Because the readers themselves are official publications, sanctioned by the government of the day, we can infer that the Canadian national identity portrayed within the readers reflects the societal norms and values of English Canadian society of the time; these are the things that English Canadians wanted their children to know about Canada.

Ethical Considerations

As Norman Blaikie observes in *Designing Social Research*, 'The major ethical issue in most social research is related to the treatment of human respondents or participants.'¹⁹⁶ My research

¹⁹³ deCharms and Moeller, "Values Expressed in American Children's Readers: 1800-1950."

¹⁹⁴ Statistics Canada, "Population Urban and Rural, by Province and Territory (Ontario)," (2009).

¹⁹⁵ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.54.

¹⁹⁶ Norman Blaikie, *Designing Social Research* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).p.20.

is limited to documents, so considerations of potential harm to participants and obtaining informed consent do not apply. However, research involving only documents as data can encounter ethical issues, not only concerning the source and nature of the documents, but also their use in research.

The first ethical concern is the privacy—were the documents intended for public use? The readers that form the primary source of data for this project were published in the thousands for use in Canadian public schools and can in no way be considered private documents. These textbooks were created with the purpose and expectation that they would be used by schoolchildren across the country and are not merely public documents—their use was *mandated* in all Ontario public schools. While the accompanying teachers' manuals and curriculum documents such as *Circular 14* were intended for use by the teaching profession, they were not restricted. The reports and legislation concerning the use of the readers, for example, the 1937 *Programme of Studies* and the 1968 *Living and Learning Report* are public documents; the first could be found in every Ontario teacher's desk while the second rapidly became 'a national bestseller... the most fashionable coffee table decoration in the land.'¹⁹⁷ All the books and reports in this study are readily available to researchers in public archives; the reports can be found on Government of Ontario websites and copies of the textbooks themselves can be purchased through second-hand book dealers.

Although there are no obvious ethical issues arising from the public nature of the readers, there may be ethical considerations around their use; one of these is copyright. I have scanned copies of all the readers used in this study for personal use. I have also used scanned images from the readers to use as illustrations in academic presentations. It would be unethical—and illegal—for me to use these scans for anything but academic purposes. For example, I cannot sell printed or digital copies of the scanned readers to the extremely lucrative North American home-schooling market or use the illustrations for commercial purposes, such as nostalgic calendars or pastiche reproductions of the readers.¹⁹⁸ If I wish to use materials from the readers outside an academic context, permission must be given by the copyright holder—that

¹⁹⁷ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*.p.219.

¹⁹⁸ A pastiche 'adult' version of the reader *Fun with Dick and Jane* is very popular with people who grew up with the original, as are 'alternate' versions of *Ladybird* book illustrations.

is, the original educational publishing company or its successor—and the company might reasonably expect to receive royalties for this use.

As a small return for the help received at the OISE archives, I offered to provide a copy of my PDF scans of the Tables of Contents of the readers to the Textbook Collection, so that future researchers would be able to determine the contents of the readers without physically handling the books. This would be useful for researchers looking for selections by a particular author or, indeed, as a starting point for any project using the same documents. Archivist Kathie Imrie is considering the copyright implications of this offer.

Bryman discusses misrepresentation and deceit both in obtaining data and its presentation in research.¹⁹⁹ It would be unethical to misinform the individual—in this case, the archivist—or organisation providing documents for research about their intended use. While the scans of the readers were made from my own books, I was also permitted to scan sections of the teachers' manuals, *Circular 14* and the *Programme of Studies* in the Textbook Collection. I was not required to sign any agreement, but was granted this privilege on the understanding that these scans were to be used only for my research; it would be unethical to use these materials for any other purpose, for example, the commercial purposes mentioned earlier.

Ethical considerations might also arise concerning private writing in public documents. The sample copies of the readers and manuals used from 1909 to 1970 in the Textbook Collection are unmarked, as might be expected in an archives initiated by the Department of Education. However, some of the schoolbooks and teachers' manuals in my personal collection contain marginalia, in some cases attributable to identifiable individuals as the owner's full name and address was written inside the cover. Examples include the precocious youngster who defaced his 1938 Grade Five reader by sticking 'girlie pinups' inside the covers and scrawling uncomplimentary remarks about his classmates in red pencil; the amusing doodlings of a sister and brother who shared a Grade Four textbook through the 1920s; and the pencil notations of a Grade Four teacher in her copy of the *Teachers' Manual for Happy Highways*. In all these cases, the marginalia was personal to the individuals and never intended for a wider audience, and, although many years have passed, it would be unethical to name the creators without permission.

¹⁹⁹ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*. pp.124-25.

Here the question for the researcher is: can the material be anonymised or is its *research value* informed by the identity of the creator. For example, the notes in the teachers' manual could be cited simply as the work of 'an Ontario Grade Four teacher', but in some cases the significance of the data depends upon the author's identity; if she subsequently edited or contributed to later textbooks or became prominent in the educational world, the marginalia might provide insight into her work. If so, permission to identify her as the creator of the notes should be sought; it should be possible to locate her (or her estate) through a teachers' professional association. Books with marginalia by notable individuals are often sought after by researchers—and collectors—providing insight into the subject's interpretation of the text. If any of the children who doodled in the textbooks achieved fame, their marginalia might be of interest to both journalists and researchers. But while a journalist might not feel constrained by ethical considerations, a responsible researcher would obtain permission before making the Prime Minister's childhood scribbles public.

The University of Edinburgh requires that postgraduate research projects undergo an ethical review. At its simplest, this takes the form of a self-audit checklist and ethical statement. Based upon my review of possible ethical issues above, I am confident that this research project examining school readers for constructions of Canadian national identity does not require a more extensive ethical review.

Conclusion

Krippendorff considers that the primary work of the content analyst is to 'Summarize the inferences from the text so that they are easily understood, interpreted, or related to intended decisions.'²⁰⁰ Within each chapter, the three main categories of analysis—'symbols', 'landscape' and 'inhabitants'—provide a consistent framework for the examination and comparison of the themes identified as constructing Canadian national identity in that era. The same categories are used in examining the evolution of national identity over the time period delineated by the project.

Krippendorff also believes that the researcher should, 'Discover patterns and relationships within findings that an unaided observer would otherwise easily

²⁰⁰ Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*.p.191.

overlook, to test hypotheses concerning various relationships.²⁰¹ The process of collecting and analysing the data in this project revealed not only the expected themes of wilderness and multiculturalism, but also some surprising patterns and themes, particularly the unresolved conflicts between modern and antimodern constructs of Canadian national identity.

Holsti observes that while ‘Intuition, insight, or a brilliant flash, borne of experience, through knowledge of one’s data, imagination, or luck are perhaps always present in creative research... Intuition is not a substitute for objectivity, for making one’s assumptions and operations with data explicit where they are open to critical view.’²⁰² While my initial research question was based upon ‘a brilliant flash, borne of experience,’ it is my hope that the methods used in selecting and analysing the data provide transparent, replicable and reliable research.

Each of the next four chapters, Chapters Three to Six, represents a successive period in Ontario public school education, with the introduction of new reading series in 1909, 1937, 1950 and the early 1960s. Chapter Three begins with a brief history of public education and readers in Ontario. Each chapter opens with a review of the government report that led to the introduction of the new reading series, and the pedagogical concerns of the era, followed by a description of textbooks themselves. I then analyse the data under the themes of Symbols and Myths, Landscape and Inhabitants. This consistent structure provides a framework for the data analysis which is discussed and summarised in Chapter Seven, the Conclusion.

²⁰¹ Ibid.p.191.

²⁰² Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*.p.19.

Chapter 3 1909-1936 'Faithful to their high British traditions'²⁰³

This chapter begins with a brief history of education in Ontario and readers up to 1908, followed by an outline of the 1907 *Report of the Textbook Commission*, the political response to the textbook scandals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which led to the publication of the 1909 *Ontario Readers*. This is followed by a physical description of the *Ontario Readers*, an overview of the contents and accompanying *Teachers' Notes*. I then examine the contents of the *Second* and *Third Ontario Readers* under the headings of Symbols and Myths, Landscape and Inhabitants with a view to discovering how Canadian national identity was constructed in these schoolbooks.

Nineteenth century education in Ontario (Upper Canada)

The District Public School Act of 1807 formally acknowledged the need for public education in the region then known as Upper Canada. The early British settlers valued education and tracts of land were set aside for the construction of schools. The 1950 *Report of the Royal Commission on Education* describes a typical elementary school of the 1830s: 'a structure of logs, about 18 feet by 20, equipped only with rough benches, a slanting board along the wall for writing, a lectern-type desk for the teacher, a fireplace, a pail and dipper for drinking water, and a supply of birch rods.'²⁰⁴ These rough buildings served as the centre of their communities



Fig.3.1 First schoolhouse, Waterloo, Ontario, built 1820.

until the pioneers had the funds—and time—to construct churches and village halls. By the late nineteenth century most had been replaced by the classic brick or wood frame schoolhouses which could be ordered by mail in kit-form, arriving fully equipped and ready to be assembled using local labour. Despite the increase in larger urban schools with multiple classrooms, in 1890, 'the one-room rural school...was

²⁰³ Minister of Education for Ontario, ed. *The Ontario Readers - Third Book* (Toronto: T. Eaton, 1909).p.vi.

²⁰⁴ Ontario, "Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, 1950."p.10.

the most common type.²⁰⁵ Many of these schoolhouses can still be seen at crossroads in rural Ontario, although they have not served their original purpose since the 1950s.

While the *British North America Act* of 1867 assigned responsibility for education to the provinces, local elected school boards were responsible for the provision of the school building, hiring a teacher and, at least to some extent, the provision of school supplies. Provincial grants covered some costs, including a teacher's base salary, but other costs including heating and maintenance were borne by local ratepayers who often provided 'in kind' services such as boarding the teacher and supplying firewood instead of cash. In the early nineteenth century, school supplies were limited: 'The teacher had his textbooks—a spelling book which might, like Mavor's, serve every purpose... a reader of more advanced type, an arithmetic, possibly a grammar and a geography, and certainly a Bible. The pupil brought such textbooks as were available, a slate, and such paper as could be found. Ink, pens, and rulers were usually home-made.'²⁰⁶ The teacher, invariably male, was 'often an old soldier or a newcomer without capital, ill qualified for more lucrative pursuits.'²⁰⁷



Fig.3.2 Goderich Public School circa 1900.

With the appointment of the Reverend Dr. Egerton Ryerson as Chief Superintendent of Education in 1844, issues such as teacher training, a common provincial curriculum and standardized textbooks were addressed. 'Normal Schools' were established for the training

of teachers and by the end of the nineteenth century most children were taught by young women graduates of these colleges, although unlicensed teachers were still accepted in remote locations. Immediately upon his appointment, Ryerson initiated a survey of available schoolbooks and within two years introduced standardized textbooks, initially using the *Irish National Series of Readers* which he considered 'the most unobjectionable,' and later

²⁰⁵ Ibid. p.17.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. p.10.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. p.10.

commissioning books designed to include greater Canadian content and reflect more up-to-date teaching practices.²⁰⁸ Ryerson required that all Ontario schools use only authorized schoolbooks, the penalty being the withdrawal of provincial funding, a practice which continues to this day.

In Ryerson's day, the list of authorized textbooks appeared in the *Journal of Education*, a publication distributed free of charge to teachers within the province. His successor terminated the *Journal*, necessitating the establishment of the single most important document (outside of the *Education Act* itself) affecting schools in Ontario: *Circular 14*. Educational historian Violet Parvin describes its origins in the 1880s:

The Department began sending out a circular containing both the textbook regulations then current and the lists of the authorized textbooks of all kinds and for all types of schools. Textbooks for public schools were listed under Schedule A of the circular. By 1888 this circular had become known as Circular 14 and it is still sent out annually from the Department of Education with the lists of books approved and recommended for elementary and secondary schools.²⁰⁹

Circular 14 includes the prices of the individual textbooks, fundamental in determining local school budgets and purchases, as well as excerpts from relevant sections of the *Education Act*. *Circular 14* was replaced in 2002 by the *Trillium List*, which serves precisely the same purpose.²¹⁰ These documents do not describe curriculum goals or teaching methods, but simply prescribe the books that may be used in Ontario schools.

From the first log cabin schools in Ontario through to the Living and Learning report of 1968, the reader was the core of the elementary school programme. In addition to teaching young children to read (a role shared by the nineteenth century 'spellers'), the reader was expected to both acquaint children with English literature and impart moral teaching. In the early years of education in Canada, academic progress was generally designated by the readers; pupils were referred to as being 'in the Third Reader.' This practice became more formalized during the 1880s when 'the four-book, or eight-grade, scheme became the accepted pattern.'²¹¹ The provinces used different sets of readers and Roman Catholic ('Separate') schools used the *Canadian Catholic Readers*, but all sets were similar in form and content.

²⁰⁸ White, *Public School Text-Books in Ontario*. pp.5-10.

²⁰⁹ Parvin, *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario, 1846-1950*. pp.47-48.

²¹⁰ Ontario Minister of Education, "Guidelines for Approval of Textbooks," ed. Ministry of Education (Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2006)., p.3.

²¹¹ Ontario, "Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, 1950."p.17.

Each reader served for two years and while in one-room schools pupils continued to be grouped by reader, in larger urban schools classes were divided into ‘forms’ or ‘grades;’ the terminology depended upon the local school board. The Second Reader in a series was used by eight and nine-year-olds in the Lower and Upper Second Forms (or Grades Three and Four) and so on, with the Fourth Reader as the final attainment in elementary education; a Fifth Reader was produced for use by High School pupils. These academic divisions continued in Ontario until the 1930s, when ‘forms’ were replaced by ‘grades’ across the province.

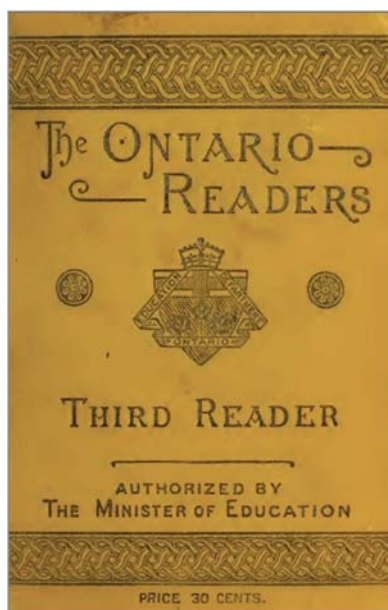


Fig.3.3 One of Ryerson’s early readers.

The copyright for Ryerson’s initial series of readers was held by the Department of Education. He also established the Educational Depository ‘with the intent of making it possible to purchase bulk orders directly from British and American firms, and then sell them, in turn, to school boards at low prices.’²¹² Seeing a lucrative market, British and American publishers quickly established Canadian branches and indigenous publishing houses sprang up. Ryerson’s successors moved to a system whereby the publishers held the copyright on the readers and competed for the contract to supply the books to the Department which then sold the books on to the schools. In 1883, George Ross, the new Minister of Education, ‘announced that the department would develop a single authorized reading

series called the Ontario Readers;’ critics saw this as ‘evidence of Ross’s desire to exercise greater control over the education system by eliminating teacher choice.’²¹³ Educational historian Penney Clark describes the strict departmental supervision of these new readers in production and pricing, explaining that, ‘It then granted three publishing companies—Thomas Nelson, Gage, and The Canada Publishing Company—exclusive rights to print the series for ten years.’²¹⁴ The contracts were renewed, allowing the three firms to ‘maintain a steadfast control over textbook printing for twenty-three years.’²¹⁵ The public outcry over the exorbitant prices charged by this ‘textbook ring’ made the publication of textbooks—and educational

²¹² Clark, “Liberty of Trade from the Thralldom of the Autocrats”: Provision of School Textbooks in Ontario, 1850-1909.” p.1071.

²¹³ Ibid. p.1076

²¹⁴ Ibid. p.1078

²¹⁵ Ibid. p.1081

reform—an election issue, described in detail by Clark in her 2006 article, “Liberty of Trade from the Thralldom of the Autocrats”.

1907 - Report of the Textbook Commission: the Ontario Readers 1909 and 1923/25

Following the change in government in 1905, the *Text Book Commission* was established to investigate the practices of the publishers. The Commission ‘found that this process resulted in inferior products at “exorbitant prices” and recommended the establishment of a single set of texts, with the copyright and plates held by the Department of Education and the printing tendered.’²¹⁶ The T. Eaton Company won the contract for this work and published the first edition of the *Ontario Readers* in 1909, with a major revision of the *First* and *Second Books* in 1923 and the *Third* and *Fourth* in 1925. These revised editions remained in use until the extensive curriculum changes introduced with the 1937 *Programme of Studies*.

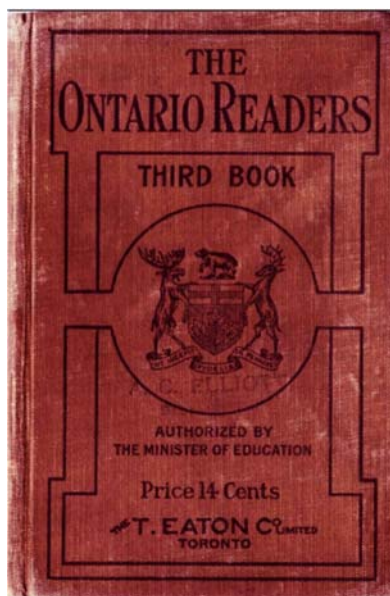


Fig.3.4 *Ontario Readers Third Book 1909*

The 1909 *Ontario Readers* are uniform in size (13 cm by 19.5 cm), increasing in thickness with successive volumes (Figure 3.4). The books are backed with cardboard covers covered in fabric. The earliest copies in the archival Ontario Textbook Collection vary in colour, from beige to brown to greenish-grey; these variations may be due to either deterioration or variations in the original dyed fabric. The covers are plain, with the title printed in black on front and spine. Printed immediately beneath the title is the provincial coat-of-arms, the words ‘Authorized by the Minister of Education’ and, in the case of the *Third Reader*, ‘Price 14 Cents;’ the price increased through the series. The

authorization would assure the parent purchasing the book that it was an official product for use in the schools; additionally a school inspector could easily spot any unauthorized materials.

It is difficult to appreciate the appearance a new *Ontario Reader* presented to a child as even the archival copies have been well-used and the paper has yellowed with age. As the books were frequently handed down through families and, at least on some occasions supplied by the school boards for use during the school year, it is probable that many children never

²¹⁶White, *Public School Text-Books in Ontario*. p.12.

used a new reader. 1920s Normal School instructor E. T. White describes the 1909 *Ontario Readers* from a contemporary perspective:

The art of book-making had made great strides since the old Ontario Readers were issued in 1884, twenty-five years earlier, and it was but natural to expect that the new readers would be much superior in every way to the old... In appearance they are somewhat of a disappointment, having rather a cheap look. One cannot but feel that the Department of Education was so definitely committed to the policy of securing cheap books that in the matter of binding, workmanship was sacrificed to cheapness.²¹⁷

Nor is White impressed by the illustrations: 'The illustrations in the Second Reader are not equal to the best, while the few pictures to be found in the Third and Fourth Readers were evidently not intended to illustrate the lessons.'²¹⁸ The *Third Book* contains photographs of the University of Toronto and the Agricultural College at Guelph, scenic views including Niagara Falls, and two agricultural scenes: a child feeding a calf and a herd of dairy cattle. None of these relate to any of the selections. The *Second Book* features both half-tones and line drawings suited to the stories, but I would agree with White that they are not as technically crisp—or as appealing—as the engravings in the 1880s *Second Readers* and less than twenty percent of the selections are illustrated.

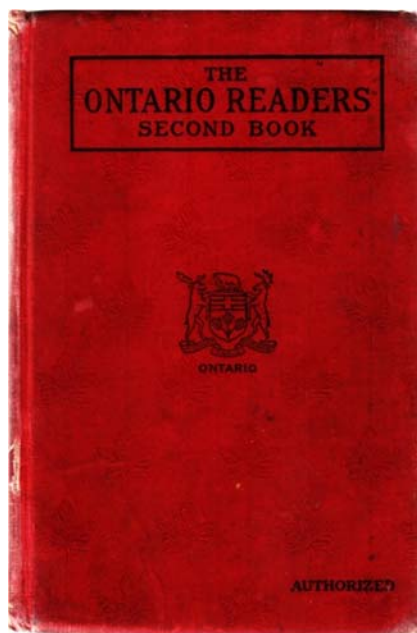


Fig. 3.5 *Ontario Readers Second Book* 1923

Writing in 1922, White notes: 'It is now eleven years since these readers were authorized and during that time they have been criticized a good deal by Public School teachers. Perhaps the criticisms that carry the greatest weight are these: (1) The lessons in several of the books are not well graded in difficulty: and (2) Some of the selections are too difficult for the mental grasp of pupils at the ages for which the books were intended.'²¹⁹ It does not seem that much attention was paid to these criticisms by those responsible for the 1923/25 revisions. Approximately ten percent of the selections were replaced by materials that seem to be very similar in content and vocabulary, and a few selections were moved from the early pages to later in the readers. The greatest internal differences are visual;

²¹⁷ Ibid. p.23.

²¹⁸ Ibid. p.23.

²¹⁹ Ibid. p.23.

the *Third Book* now contains illustrations that relate to the stories, with artwork similar to the half-tone photographs in the *Second Book*, although less than fifteen percent of the selections are illustrated. Some are the work of C.W. Jefferys, a Canadian artist whose work features prominently in pre-World War II schoolbooks.

Externally, while virtually identical in size and shape to the 1909 editions, the books present a very different appearance (Figure 3.5). The drab covers have been replaced by handsome crimson boards embossed with small maple leaves. The provincial coat-of-arms has shrunk to a more modest size, as has the imprinted 'AUTHORIZED,' while information about the price and publisher now appears on the first page. I accidentally discovered that the red dye used in the fabric cover is not 'fast' and bleeds at the smallest hint of moisture, which must have been a great trial to small pupils and their teachers. The red covers remained unchanged until the Ontario Readers were replaced in the late 1930s; not surprisingly, none of the new readers had red covers and all seem reasonably colour-fast.

Both the 1909 and 1923/5 revisions include a coloured frontispiece depicting the Union Jack, with the words 'One Flag, One Fleet, One Throne,' and 'The Union Jack' in Gothic type. After 1926, the image remained the same but the text simply read 'Our Flag.' Following the Contents, the *Second Book* then presents 'God Save the King' and the *Third* has an Empire Day address by Governor General Earl Grey, both with heavy italic print, similar to a family Bible, with severe black borders. A Table of Contents is provided in both the 1909 and 1923/5 editions (Appendix III). This is simply a list of the selections, with authors and page numbers; poems are indicated by italics. No attempt is made to present the selections thematically and they seem to be arranged primarily in order of difficulty. White considers that the books are 'cheap' and certainly the 1880s readers were printed on superior paper, with numerous crisp engravings and more attractive bindings. Both the 1909 *Ontario Readers* and the 1923/5 revised editions smack of utility. The books are printed on thin shiny paper, unlike most children's storybooks of the early 1900s which were usually printed on thick matt paper.

It is interesting to compare the appearance of the 1909 and 1923/25 Ontario Readers with other books available to Canadian children during the same timeframe. Despite the lack of public libraries outside major centres, early twentieth-century children in rural Ontario were not entirely deprived of reading material. Rural families could easily purchase books, including storybooks, through the *Eaton's Catalogue*, a mail order operation serving the country from 1884, operated by the same T. Eaton Company that published the Ontario

Readers from 1909 to the late 1930s. Very few indigenous Canadian children's books were available until the 1960s, compelling children to read storybooks published in Britain and the United States; even books written by Canadian writers were published outside the country.²²⁰ British children's fiction published from the late 1800s through to the 1930s was typically printed on very thick paper; in the early 1920s, 300-page books including school stories and adventures by popular authors were often over five centimeters thick, weighing 300 to 400 grams. Later books were printed on slightly thinner paper; a 1930s copy of L.M. Montgomery's *Magic for Marigold* was just over 300 pages, three centimeters thick and 300 grams. The highly popular American series fiction books (*Tom Swift*, *The Bobbsey Twins*, *The Hardy Boys*, *Nancy Drew*, etc.) published by the Stratemeyer Empire beginning in 1899 were of a uniform size, under 200 pages, just over two centimeters thick and weighing 275 grams. In comparison, the 1925 edition of *The Ontario Readers – Third Book*, while of similar external dimensions to a *Hardy Boys* mystery contained 350 pages and weighed 500 grams.

The weighty nature of the textbooks implies that they contain serious information; the small print in the *Third Book* requires more attention and concentration than *Tom Swift and His Giant Telescope*, indicating that the schoolbook is not intended for leisure reading. When compared to the bright paper covers and attractive printed boards of the early twentieth-century children's fiction, the plain covers add to the impression of serious purpose, while the imprinted provincial coat of arms and 'Authorized' impart an official sanction. Overall, children picking up a heavy dense reader knew that the intention of the book and its contents was purposeful study, not entertainment.

The need for a teacher's guide or manual to accompany the readers was recognised with the 1910 publication of *Ontario Readers Books II, III, IV*, an addition to a series of *Public School Manuals* developed by the Ontario Department of Education. The preface states:

These notes are addressed, not to the pupils, but to the teacher. They are intended: (1) To furnish him with such information with reference to the selections in the Readers as may not be easily accessible. (2) To suggest the spirit and the method in which he should present the various selections to the class. (3) To enlarge his literary interests and to widen his area of inquiry.²²¹

²²⁰ Examples: Dora Olive Thompson of Toronto produced eight popular children's books, all published by the Religious Tract Society, London in the 1920s; Muriel Denison's *Susannah of the Mounties* series was published by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York in the 1930s; Lucy Maud Montgomery's first seven books, including the famous *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), were originally published by L.C. Page & Co. of Boston.

²²¹ Department of Education Ontario, ed. *Ontario Readers - Books II, III, IV*, Public School Manuals (Toronto: K.L.Cameron, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1910)., p.3.

The booklet consists of brief notes on each selection as they appear in *The Ontario Readers*, providing geographical, historical, or literary contexts for each, in addition to explanations for unfamiliar terms. The notes covering *Books Two* and *Three* are particularly sparse and while some questions are provided for classroom use, no additional activities are suggested to accompany the readings.

Despite the lack of detail, these manuals would be of particular use to teachers with little training beyond the *Fourth* or *Fifth Book* themselves. In 1909, while first- and second-class teachers had studied at teacher training schools ('Normal Schools'), third-class teachers had only attended a 'highly practical training in classroom management and teaching methods... a fourteen-week course, close to home, with minimum fees,' and permit-holders might have no formal teacher training at all.²²² Most of these less-qualified teachers were found in rural one-room schools: 'In 1909... over 90 per cent of third-class and permit holders were found in the country schoolhouse.'²²³

The development and publication of the new 1909 readers paralleled the spread of the 'New Education' movement which, as Robert Stamp writes, 'ruffled the water of Ontario schools in the twenty years preceding the First World War.'²²⁴ Stamp explains that, 'New methods of instruction stressed learning by activity rather than memorization; correlation of the subject matter around the child's own widening experience; enrichment of class-room study with material grown from the school's immediate neighbourhood; and the substitution of love for fear, and of interest for authority, in classroom discipline.'²²⁵ While the work of early nineteenth century European educational reformers Johann Pestalozzi and Friedrich Froebel was known to Canadian educators both through their writing and 'an endless number of convention addresses,' Stamp considers that the American educational philosopher John Dewey and psychologist G. Stanley Hall had the greatest influence on Canadian educational reformers at the turn of the century. In *No Place of Grace*, historian T.J. Jackson Lears credits Dewey with imprinting an antimodernist influence on early twentieth century education. Dewey especially believed in the value of experiential learning and vocational training as leading to 'proper character formation,' which would remedy the social ills of modern

²²² Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976.*, p.14-15.

²²³ *Ibid.* p.78.

²²⁴ *Ibid.* p.72.

²²⁵ *Ibid.* p.53.

urbanization and industrialization.²²⁶ Driven in part by antimodern social reformers, the New Education movement sought to ‘preserve the traditional values of a society threatened by urban-industrial growth’ by providing the ‘occupational, civic and moral training which the family in the new urban environment seemed no longer able to provide.’ The New Education promoted the establishment of kindergartens, ‘manual training’ (carpentry for boys, sewing and cooking for girls), physical education, school gardens, dental and health inspections, as well as ‘moral training.’²²⁷

While the ‘character forming’ moral aspects of the New Education dominate the 1909 *Ontario Readers*, the child-centred philosophy did not affect the content to any visible degree. In particular, the *Second Book* (used by children age eight to ten) lacks the vivacity of its nineteenth-century predecessor; the engravings are less clear and lack the entertaining details seen in the 1884 book. While the 1909 *Second Book* contains less natural history and more ‘literature,’ the whimsy of Robert Louis Stevenson’s verses is overshadowed by the inclusion of numerous moral tales, plus six each of *Aesop’s Fables* and readings from *The Bible*. The 1909 *Third Book* is somewhat more child-friendly than its nineteenth-century predecessor, with the inclusion of amusing selections from Dickens and Lewis Carroll, but the illustrations are distributed sparsely through the pages of text. There is no suggestion that the stories in the 1909 readers might have any bearing upon the pupils’ young lives, whereas many selections in the 1884 readers address the child directly: ‘Our clothing, as you know, is made of wool, cotton, or linen. Can you tell why such materials are selected for the purpose?’²²⁸ On the rare occasions when the child is addressed in the 1909 readers, the purpose is to impart moral instruction: ‘Boys and girls, whenever you meet a flatterer beware of him.’²²⁹

The New Education ideology reflected the political aims of the new Conservative provincial government of 1905 in its goal of creating social stability in the face of growing urbanization, but despite extensive funding, ‘the movement gradually fell prey to the twin perils of teacher indifference and public criticism.’²³⁰ The movement placed great demands upon the often poorly-trained and inexperienced teachers, especially those working alone in

²²⁶ Lears, *No Place of Grace - Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*. p.78-79.

²²⁷ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976.*, p.51-58.

²²⁸ *Third Reader*, The Ontario Readers (Toronto: Copp Clark Company, W.G Gage Company, 1884)., p.195.

²²⁹ Minister of Education for Ontario, ed. *The Ontario Readers - Second Book* (Toronto: T. Eaton, 1909)., p.13.

²³⁰ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976.*, p.71.

the province's one-room schools. More importantly, the public considered subjects such as manual training and nature study to be American notions: 'Frills were bad enough; worse still they were "Yankee frills" ... And American ideas were highly suspect during the decade of the Alaska boundary dispute and Ontario's decisive rejection of the proposed Canadian-American reciprocity agreement.'²³¹ Educational historian Amy von Heking clarifies the rejection of this reciprocity agreement (essentially a proposed Free Trade Agreement for the early twentieth century), noting that 'English-Canadians' strong identification with the British Empire and their suspicion of the United States were clearly embodied in school content.'²³²

Rather than furthering a potentially controversial child-centred educational philosophy, the Conservative government turned its attention to the dubious ethics of the textbook publishing industry, as outlined earlier in this chapter and described in detail by Penney Clark, in her article examining the economics of textbook publishing in Ontario from 1850-1909.²³³ The resultant 1909 *Ontario Readers* are more reflective of political concerns about textbook publishing costs than pedagogical reform. The Great War did not have any noticeable effect on the *Second* and *Third Books*, except possibly for the fact that the books were reprinted without revision until 1923/25. Stamp credits continuation of tradition to Henry J. Cody, who became minister of education in 1918:

No radical social or political reformer, Cody was determined to build a post-war society on the traditional foundations of Protestant Christianity, political conservatism, and Anglo-Saxon racial superiority... The new minister moved quickly to strengthen patriotic teaching in the schools of Ontario.²³⁴

The years immediately following the Great War marked the emergence of the National Council of Education. As Stamp reports, the immediate goal of the organization, formed initially by Ontario manufacturers, then joined by leaders from Protestant church groups and the 'highest echelons of the social register', was to "maintain industrial stability and to secure wise consideration and prudent treatment of problems of reconstruction," urging 'national goals for Canadian schools.'²³⁵ The organization disappeared by the end of the 1920s: 'Although its goals were not at variance with those of provincial departments, its promotion of a national bureau of education ran into opposition from the provinces, jealously protecting

²³¹ Ibid. p.71

²³² von Heyking, *Creating Citizens - History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980*.p.385.

²³³ Clark, "'Liberty of Trade from the Thralldom of the Autocrats": Provision of School Textbooks in Ontario, 1850-1909."pp.1065-96.

²³⁴ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*.p.104.

²³⁵ Ibid.p.100.

their constitutional rights.²³⁶ The organization's sole legacy is a small textbook, *This Canada of Ours: An Introduction to Canadian Civics*. While it is not recommended for a particular age or school grade, the text is less complex than much of the *Third Reader*, so it would be suitable for children ages ten or eleven. Significantly, the 'Introduction' is written by The Honourable Vincent Massey, a member of an eminent Canadian industrial dynasty and certainly among the 'highest echelons of the social register.' Massey later became Governor General of Canada (1952-59) and had great influence in constructions of Canadian identity, not only in his speeches and writing as Governor General but also as Chair of the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* (1949-51), which will be reviewed in Chapters Five and Six. Massey had no doubts about the importance of education in the creation of Canadian identity; the 'Introduction' contains his often-quoted words: 'To our schools we must look for the good Canadian.'²³⁷

It is important to acknowledge that the National Council of Education was first inspired by industrialists, seeking economic stability in the post-war years through the development of 'national goals for Canadian schools' rather than politicians or cultural leaders. In his chapter on 'Industrial Society,' Gellner writes at length about the vital role of state education in modern industrial society, and yet in Canada education historically has been, and remains, a provincial responsibility: elementary school children do not follow precisely the same syllabus across the country.²³⁸ Does this affect their constructions of Canadian national identity? I will return to this theme in both Chapter 5, when the readers used in Ontario were intended for use across the country and Chapter 6, when we see more regionalization within the content of the readers. The *Ontario Readers* remained in use until replaced in 1937 by new readers prescribed by the *Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools*.

Symbols and myths

The Canadian national identity constructed by the readers of this era is based entirely upon British imperial ethnicity, as described by John Darwin.²³⁹ This hegemonic construction was created by the educators of the period, sanctioned by Ministry of Education and can be thus considered representative of an official preferred identity. We see the emergence of two

²³⁶ Ibid.p.100.

²³⁷ Massey, "Introduction."p.11

²³⁸ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.pp.19-37.

²³⁹ Darwin, "Empire and Ethnicity."

interconnected metanarratives of Canadian identity: survival and making a home in the wilderness, but these are developed only in the context of a British ethnicity.

The *Ontario Readers* were not designed for use across Canada, but only in the province of Ontario and reflect the British ethnicity of the great majority of the residents. They served throughout the Great War (1914-1918) and the Great Depression (1929-1939 in Canada), with only minor changes with revisions to the *Second Reader* in 1923 and the *Third* in 1925. The unnamed editors were constrained by the need to include and arrange material suited to children's vocabulary and understanding, drawing on works written for different purposes and in most cases an adult audience. While the revised editions of 1923/25 reveal attempts to incorporate work by more Canadian authors and artists, the contents are not substantially altered.

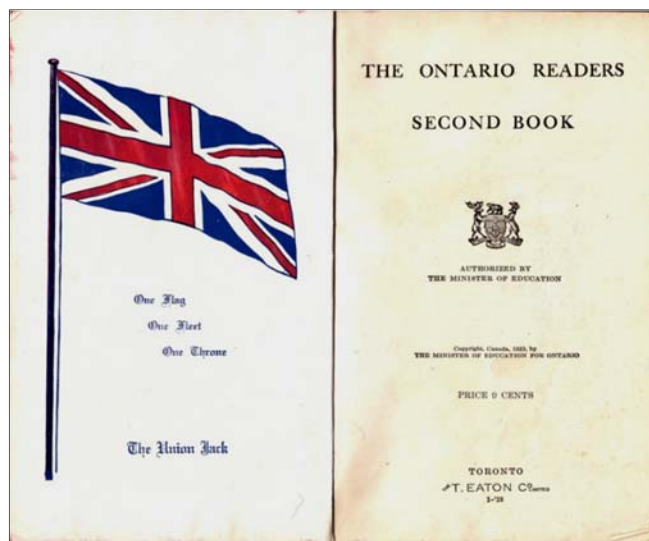


Fig. 3.6 Frontispiece *Ontario Readers Second Book*

Flags, insignia and anthems are primary representations of national identity. All the *Ontario Readers* include a coloured frontispiece of the Union Jack (Union Flag), with the inscription: 'One Flag, One Fleet, One Throne,' (Figure 3.6) changed to 'Our Flag' in 1926, and the *Second Reader* opens with 'God Save the King.'

The flag is given great importance, both through its position as the frontispiece and as the only coloured print within the readers. While twenty-first century Canadians might consider the flag and anthem to be the imposition of symbols of British imperialism through the *Ontario Readers*, it should be remembered that the Union Jack served as Canada's official flag until it was replaced by the Maple Leaf in 1965, and 'God Save the King [Queen]' was Canada's national anthem until 'O Canada!' was formally adopted in 1980.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Although the Red Ensign was approved for use on Canadian federal buildings in 1945, it was never adopted formally as Canada's official national flag.

The prose selection, 'The Union Jack,' explains the significance of the flag:

The Union Jack is the emblem of British rule. It recalls the great deeds done in war and peace to make our country strong and keep it free. Its colours remind us of the virtues on which our Empire rests—red signifying bravery; white, purity; and blue, truth.

Great race, whose empire of splendour
Has dazzled the wondering world!
May the flag that floats o'er thy wide domains
Be long to all winds unfurled!
Three crosses in concord blended,
The banner of Britain's might!²⁴¹

While the flag and anthem are both long-established symbols of the British Empire, Empire Day is a classic example of an 'invented tradition' as described by historian Eric Hobsbawm. Hobsbawm stresses the role of 'invented tradition' in the construction of the 'comparatively recent historical invention, the "nation", with its associated phenomena: nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest.'²⁴²

The *Third Reader* opens with a strong 'official' statement of Canadian national identity in the 'Empire Day' address signed 'Earl Grey, Governor-General of Canada' (Figure 3.7). Earl Grey's term ended in 1911, but this speech was included in both editions of the *Third Reader*.²⁴³ From 1909 to 1936, every time ten- and eleven-year-olds opened their readers, they were reminded of Canada's role within the imagined community of the British Empire, the pink dominating the map of the world in their classroom.

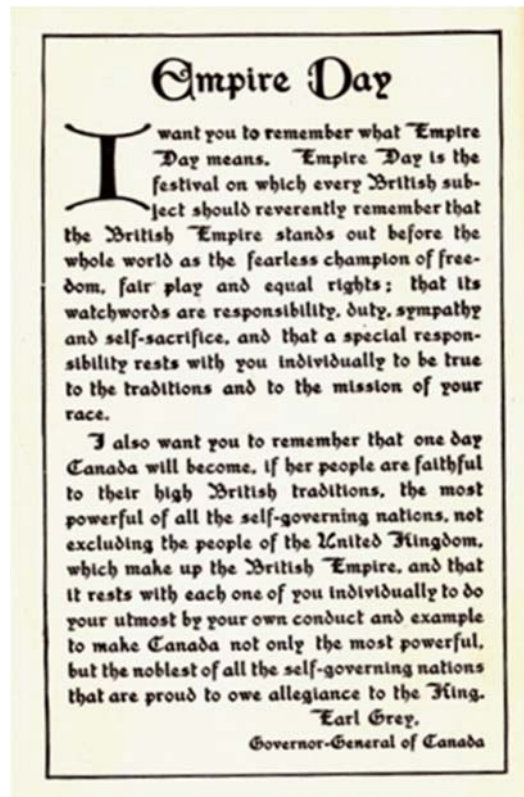
The role of Empire Day, which was observed on the Friday before the 24th of May holiday honouring Queen Victoria's birthday, cannot be underestimated in constructions of early twentieth-century Canadian identity. As Canada's national holiday, Dominion Day (July 1), occurred during the summer holidays, Empire Day was one of the most important events in the Canadian school year. Historian Daniel Francis describes the origins of Empire day, first proposed in 1897 by Mrs Clementine Fessenden, 'a Hamilton [Ontario] clubwoman' who envisaged an 'outpouring of public spiritedness' to promote patriotism among

²⁴¹ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Second Book* p.184.

²⁴² Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions."p.14.

²⁴³ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.p.vi.

schoolchildren.²⁴⁴ The concept spread and Empire Day rapidly became not only a Canadian tradition but one observed throughout the British Empire; Ian Grosvenor's description of the 1939 Empire Day celebrations in English schools sounds very similar to the activities of their



3.7 Empire Day Address *Ontario Readers Third Book*

British traditions' are those to be valued. These include 'responsibility, duty, sympathy and self-sacrifice', all modelled throughout the *Third Reader*, albeit in a British, not Canadian, context in poems including 'England's Dead,' 'Hearts of Oak,' 'The Order of Valour,' and 'The Charge of the Light Brigade,' and accounts such as 'The Relief at Lucknow,' and 'Captain Scott's Last Journey.'

Hobsbawm observes that the main characteristics of invented traditions is that they tend to be 'unspecific and vague as to the nature of the values, rights and obligations of the group membership they inculcate,' specifically citing the values preached by Earl Grey of

Canadian counterparts.²⁴⁵ Initially 'children were asked to write essays about the Empire, sing patriotic songs and listen to uplifting speeches', one of which was Earl Grey's 'Empire Day' address; later celebrations included elaborate pageants and parades.²⁴⁶ Francis reports that 'Empire Day acquired a martial spirit with the addition of rifle drills and cadet parades... by the mid-1920s in Toronto as many as 10,000 uniformed boys marched to Queen's Park, accompanied by girls in white dresses carrying baskets of flowers.'²⁴⁷

Earl Grey's brief 'Empire Day' address consists of only 168 words, yet several phrases are repeated, stressing their importance. 'Tradition' is a key concept in constructions of national identity and 'high

²⁴⁴ Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History*.pp.64-66.

²⁴⁵ Ian Grosvenor, "'There's No Place Like Home': Education and the Making of National Identity," *History of Education* 28, no. 3 (1999).

²⁴⁶ Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History*.pp.65-66.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*p.66.

‘patriotism’, ‘loyalty’, ‘duty,’ while noting that their significance lies ‘precisely in their undefined universality.’²⁴⁸ Hobsbawm considers that, ‘The crucial element seems to have been the invention of emotionally and symbolically charged signs of club membership rather than the statutes and objects of the club.’²⁴⁹ In this case, the ‘club’ is the British Empire and children are informed of the responsibilities of membership, albeit in terms they might not understand. Ten- and eleven-year-olds might also have been confused by the second paragraph, wherein Canadians are defined as ‘British subjects’ who ‘owe allegiance to the King,’ yet Canada is repeatedly described as a ‘self-governing nation.’

Evidently Canada is not yet ‘powerful’—that is in the future—‘one day’—and conditional, depending not only upon being ‘faithful to high British traditions’ but also on children’s personal conduct. Twice Earl Grey places ‘a special responsibility’ for Canada’s future squarely on the shoulders of young Canadians: ‘it rests with each one of you individually’. Within the *Third Reader*, the concepts of both ‘power’ and ‘nobleness’ seem to be associated with British military exploits and the superiority of the British Empire is emphasized in the phrases: ‘fearless champion’, ‘high British traditions’ and ‘the mission of your race’. Francis refers to Empire Day as ‘an unabashed celebration of Anglo-Saxon superiority, a day on which Anglo-Canadians... gloried in their membership in the Master Race.’²⁵⁰ The expression ‘master race’ describing British imperial identity, occurs frequently when writing about late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canadian identity, and, as will be discussed later in this chapter under ‘Inhabitants.’ The Empire Day address is one of the very few pieces within the *Second* and *Third Readers* where children are addressed directly and the only suggestion of ‘connecting our everyday lives with a national destiny,’ part of the ‘narrative of nation’ described by Stuart Hall.²⁵¹ The ‘narrative of nation’ is Canada’s role as a part of the British Empire.

Canadian historian Arthur Lower observed that: ‘At the turn of the century the Canadian public school was not making young Canadians but young Englishmen. It is not surprising that... those boys rushed off across the seas to fight for a country they had never

²⁴⁸ Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions."pp.10-11.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.p.11.

²⁵⁰ Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History*.p.66.

²⁵¹ Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity."p.293.

seen—to fight as perhaps men had never fought before.²⁵² This sense of duty to a Britain young Canadians had never seen is clearly expressed in ‘The Canadian’:

I never saw the cliffs of snow,
The Channel billows tipped with cream,
The restless, eddying tides that flow
About the Island of my dream...
And still the name of England
Which tyrants laugh to scorn
Can thrill my soul. It is to me
*A very bugle-horn.*²⁵³

The 1923 *Second Reader* contains three tales of heroism in the Great War, but no stories of Canadian courage. The 1925 *Third Reader* touches on Canada’s role in the Great War with the inclusion of two poems, although it is impossible to know how these works were presented to students; ‘In Flanders Fields,’ although written by a Canadian does not refer specifically to *Canadian* valour and there is no evidence that a specifically Canadian national identity is constructed through participation in World War I, despite the widespread belief that Canada ‘came of age’ during this era. The revised *Ontario Readers* were in use until 1936-38, defining Canada’s role in the British Empire for the young people of age to fight in World War II, and, as Stamp reports, ‘guaranteeing that yet another generation of Ontario youngsters would be exposed to an over-riding emphasis on traditional moral and political values, Britain’s past military glories, and Canada’s place in the Empire.’²⁵⁴ The celebration of Empire Day seems to have disappeared from Canadian schools towards the mid-1930s; the fact that the *Ontario Readers* were discontinued at that time is likely coincidental.

Within the *Ontario Readers*, the sole symbol of *Canadian* identity rather than British imperial ethnicity is the Maple Leaf. According to Heritage Canada, the Maple Leaf was suggested as a symbol of Canada as early as 1836, and eventually adopted as the Canadian flag in 1965. It was commonly used a symbol of Canada during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: ‘During the First World War, the maple leaf was included in the badge of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Since 1921, the Royal Arms of Canada have included three maple leaves as a distinctive Canadian emblem;’ red and white were officially approved as

²⁵² Arthur R.M. Lower, *Canadians in the Making* (Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, 1958).pp.352-53.

²⁵³ Minister of Education for Ontario, ed. *The Ontario Readers - Third Book* (Toronto: T. Eaton, 1925).pp.169-170. Refrain italicized in original.

²⁵⁴ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*.pp.104-105.

Canada's national colours at the same time.²⁵⁵ The official colour and symbol are recognised in the use of an embossed maple leaf on the red covers of the 1923 and 1925 revised *Ontario Readers* although there is no reference to this use within the text.

The poem, 'The Maple,' is included in both editions of the *Third Reader*. In addition to purely description verses, the symbolism of the Maple Tree is made clear in the following lines:

'A fitting emblem, she,
Of this our land of promise,
Of hope, of liberty...
Then hail to the broad-leaved Maple!
With her fair and changeful dress—
A type of our youthful country
In its pride and loveliness;'

The *Teachers' Notes* confirm that: 'The object of the poem is to show how appropriate the maple is as an emblem of Canada. The light green foliage upon the darker background is emblematic of a new era of prosperity; the freely flowing sap, of the wealth of her natural resources; the leaves bursting from the buds, of the rich promise of our national destiny; the fall of the crimsoned leaves, of the patriotic devotion of our people.'²⁵⁶ Again 'youth' is associated with Canada, similar to the 'future' mentioned in *Empire Day*.

Provincial identity is affirmed both through the series title—the *Ontario Readers*—and through the use of the Ontario coat-of-arms, which dominates the covers of all the 1909 textbooks. The 1923/ 25 revised editions feature a much smaller coat-of-arms.

Landscape

Historian Brian Osborne writes about the role of landscape in constructing Canadian national identity: 'Familiar material worlds become loaded with symbolic sites, dates, and events that provide social continuity, contribute to the collective memory, and establish spatial and temporal reference points for society.'²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ Canadian Heritage, "The Maple Leaf," Government of Canada, <http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1363626184104/1363626227047>.

²⁵⁶ Ontario Department of Education, *Ontario Teachers' Manuals - Notes on Ontario Readers*, (Toronto: The Copp Clark Company, Limited, 1916), <http://www.archive.org/details/OISEnotesontreader17miniuft.p.98>.

²⁵⁷ Osborne, "Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in Its Place."p.39.

The *Ontario Readers* were not intended for use across Canada, but only in Ontario, so perhaps it is not unreasonable that there is no concerted attempt to create a national identity through portrayals of the Canadian landscape. The principal exception is the poem, ‘A Song of Canada,’ which begins: ‘Sing me a song of our great Dominion!’ and concludes with ‘Well she is worthy a noble song!’²⁵⁸ The poem is summarised in the *Teachers’ Notes*: ‘The subject of each of the successive stanzas is stated in the first line—her mighty mountains, tranquil forests, stately rivers, fertile prairies, blazing campfires, worthy Canadians.’²⁵⁹ The poem provides the sole comprehensive description of the Canadian landscape in the *Second* and *Third Readers*, and, as can be seen from the *Teachers’ Notes’* synopsis, omits few clichéd expressions, establishing phrases such as ‘silence eternal and peace profound’ of the ‘tranquil forests’ as descriptors of Canadian landscape. Children lacking personal experience or other sources would doubtless learn to think of Canada in these terms.

‘A Song of Canada,’ and ‘The Athabaska Trail’ contain the only descriptions of Canada as a whole, ‘from sea to sea’; there are no other textual references to the Prairies, the Pacific coast, or the Maritime Provinces. While geographically, ‘Canada’ is effectively limited to the St Lawrence River system west to Niagara Falls, with two brief forays to Algonquin Park and Athabaska, this likely does not represent a deliberate preference for a ‘Laurentian’ or ‘Canadian Shield’ thesis of Canadian identity but is more likely related to the availability of material suitable for young children. Historian Jack Bumsted summarises the ‘Laurentian thesis,’ which was based on the writings of Canadian economist and philosopher Harold Innis and historian Donald Creighton. Innis theorised that:

The Canadian early economy was a northern one based on resources traded overseas using the country’s natural waterways, which ran in an east-west direction... Innis’s insights were translated into political terms by Donald Creighton... [who] believed that the St Lawrence river and lake system was the basis not only of Canadian development and expansion before 1850 but also of the creation of a transcontinental nation in the 1860s and afterward.²⁶⁰

The 1909 *Second Reader* is completely devoid of references to Canadian locations. The 1923 edition includes ‘An Adventure With Wolves’: ‘Nearly a hundred years ago, in one of the early settlements of this Province, then called Upper Canada, an exciting adventure

²⁵⁸ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.pp.293-94.

²⁵⁹ Department of Education, *Ontario Teachers’ Manuals - Notes on Ontario Readers*.p.80.

²⁶⁰ Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity."p.25.

befell a young lad only ten years of age.’²⁶¹ This is the *sole* reference to a specific Canadian location in the *Second Reader* used by children ages eight to ten between 1909 and 1936. Both the *Second* and *Third Readers* include pastoral poems by Canadian poets, including Bliss Carmen’s ‘Woodland Rain’ and Archibald Lampman’s ‘Hepaticas,’ but these do not reveal a distinctly Canadian voice and could be set anywhere in north-eastern North America, or, in some cases, Britain. Of the forty-three illustrations in the 1923 *Second Reader*, only the illustration for ‘An Adventure With Wolves’ is specially Canadian; an additional ten pastoral scenes depict children playing in the countryside, plus wildlife and plants which might be Canadian.

The *Third Reader* presents far more Canadian content than the *Second*, albeit largely from a colonial perspective. Of the eight illustrations in the 1909 edition, seven depict Canadian locations, ‘Alexandra the Queen Mother’ being the exception. Because these illustrations do not relate to the text, the primary reason for their inclusion seems to be to impart a sense of Canadian landscape. Two depict academic institutions, the University of Toronto and the Ontario Agricultural College, probably with the intention of inspiring young scholars. The remaining views include Niagara Falls, ‘The Highlands of Ontario’ and dairy cattle. The final engraving, ‘Deep Sea Fishers,’ is the sole illustration obviously outside Ontario. The 1925 revised edition contains twenty illustrations, mainly by Canadian artist CW Jefferys. In contrast to the 1909 edition, these relate directly to the text, but few depict specifically Canadian scenes, simply providing an indistinct background for the characters. Overall, approximately twenty-five percent of the illustrations in the revised *Second* and *Third Readers* could be considered to depict Canadian locations, scenery or wildlife.

Twenty-one of the one hundred and fourteen selections in the 1925 *Third Reader* are either written by Canadians or could be considered to be set in Canada, an increase of six over the 1909 edition.²⁶² While the prose selections deal with Canadian locations, there is no particularly Canadian voice or perspective except possibly in the animal stories by Ernest Thompson Seton and Charles GD Roberts, which will be covered under ‘Inhabitants.’ It is more the subject matter than the writing style that imparts ‘Canadianess’ to the selections, confirming historian Philip Buckner’s observation that in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Canada, ‘the literature, and the poetry that young Canadians studied in school were

²⁶¹ Minister of Education for Ontario, ed. *The Ontario Readers - Second Book* (Toronto: T. Eaton, 1923), pp.33-35.

²⁶² These include extracts from ‘The Song of Hiawatha,’ as the poem is based on the legends of the Ojibway of the Great Lakes region.

largely British, although with a substantial proportion of works written by Canadians who drew upon British models.²⁶³

In the 1909 *Second Reader*, along with four selections from the Bible, six more set in the East, and five in ancient Greece and Rome, four selections are specifically set in Britain; in the 1923 edition the number of stories set in Britain increases to seven. The *Third Reader* contains similar stories of 'Old English Life' and is dominated by works by British authors. This inclusion of numerous British stories, poems and legends in the *Ontario Readers* not only supports Buckner's observation, but also demonstrates that in the early twentieth century Canadians strongly perceived of themselves British, not only militarily and politically, but also culturally, showing great familiarity with—and affection for—British locations and scenery. The *Teachers' Manual* explains unfamiliar terms in the *Second Reader* with reference to their British equivalents: 'Chickadees. Called in England titmice.'²⁶⁴ 'The groschen is a German coin, in value little more than an English penny.'²⁶⁵ The implication is Ontario teachers would be more familiar with British wildlife and currency than their own.

The *Second* and *Third Readers* include only two stories, 'Mary Elizabeth' and 'The Story of a Fire' which, lacking specific place names could possibly be set in Canadian urban locations; all other selections either specified or implied as Canadian take place in rural or wilderness locations. 'A Song of Canada' presents cities from an antimodern perspective, comparing the 'city's domes' and the 'toiler in town' unfavourably with the 'forest arches' and the 'roamer in wilderness'.²⁶⁶ 'The Athabaska Trail' looks optimistically to the future, referring to 'little prairie hamlets' as 'noble cities still to be'.²⁶⁷ In contrast, the readers are replete with tales set in the cities of ancient Greece and Rome and somewhat more modern stories set in Paris and London. These European locations are almost invariably described in the opening lines as 'great': 'In the great city of Rome, there lived years ago a poor slave named Androclus.'²⁶⁸ 'Long ago there reigned in England a Queen, named Elizabeth... She lived in a palace near the great River Thames.'²⁶⁹

²⁶³ Buckner, "The Creation of the Dominion of Canada, 1860-1901."pp.80-81.

²⁶⁴ Ontario, *Ontario Readers - Books Ii, Iii, Iv*.p.16.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.p.21.

²⁶⁶ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.pp.293-94.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.pp.111-12.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.p.94.

²⁶⁹ *The Ontario Readers - Second Book*.p.165.

While British cities may be ‘great’, the land itself is almost invariably described as ‘beautiful’: ‘Do you know people who have lived in England, that beautiful land beyond the sea?’²⁷⁰ The beauties of the English countryside are enforced through inclusion of poems such as ‘Home Thoughts From Abroad’ and ‘The Barrel Organ,’ although one cannot help wondering what rural Ontario schoolteachers and their pupils made of the opening lines: ‘Go down to Kew in lilac-time.’²⁷¹ In contrast, Canada is never described as ‘beautiful’ outside of ‘A Song For Canada,’ but is largely constructed as the inhospitable landscape of the pioneer stories.

Of the twenty-one Canadian selections in the 1925 *Third Reader*, five are stories of pioneers, all written by well-known Canadian authors. ‘A Forest Fire,’ (Susannah Moodie), ‘Ride for Life’ (Ralph Connor), ‘They Seek Their Meat From God’ (Charles GD Roberts), and ‘The Story of the McIntosh Red’ (O.J. Stevenson) describe the Canadian landscape from a British settler’s perspective. The narrator of Louis Hemon’s ‘A Pioneer’s Wife’ is referred to as a ‘Quebec pioneer’ in the introductory notes, but there is no direct indication that he is French; numerous British immigrants settled in Quebec, especially in the Ottawa Valley and Eastern Townships. The stories are similar in their descriptions of the landscape: endless forests to clear, lonely shanties in small clearings surrounded by swamps and predatory animals waiting to attack settlers and their livestock. The humans are isolated within the inhospitable landscape, facing elements beyond their control and understanding. Although the five brief selections do not directly reflect the inward-looking ‘garrison’ mentality described by Northrop Frye in *The Bush Garden* as a dominant theme in Canadian literary identity, they accurately represent the isolation and fear that are the source of that identity in Canadian literature.²⁷² In *Survival*, her classic guide to Canadian Literature, Margaret Atwood notes that Moodie wrote ‘for the express purpose of telling others *not* to come’ to Canada and the others paint a similarly bleak picture of endless forests, stony clearings and backbreaking toil.²⁷³ In all cases the forest—or ‘bush’, a distinctive British settler expression used in both Canada and Australia—is the enemy. The character of the pioneers will be discussed in the next section on Inhabitants and in greater detail in Chapter Five.

In contrast to the stories of settlers hewing farms from an inhospitable landscape, two selections provide favourable views of Canada through a distinctively British tourist lens. The

²⁷⁰ *The Ontario Readers - Second Book* p.109.

²⁷¹ *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.p.244

²⁷² Frye, *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination*.

²⁷³ Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*.p.149. Emphasis in original.

first, 'A Canadian Boat Song,' appears in both editions of the *Third Reader* and at least once in each succeeding generation of readers.²⁷⁴ Written by the Irish poet Thomas Moore on the occasion of his 1804 visit to Canada, the poem describes setting out from Montreal by boat. Except for the place names, 'Utawa' instead of the more conventional 'Ottawa,' and 'St Ann's' (referring to Ste Anne de Bellevue, on Montreal Island), there is no particular sense of Canadian landscape beyond the references to forest and river: 'Soon as the woods on shore look dim' and 'The Rapids are near.'²⁷⁵ The poem was set to music and sung by generations of Canadian school children; when singing about 'Utawas' tide!' in the 1960s, my classmates and I simply thought the poet couldn't spell 'Ottawa' correctly and had his facts wrong—the Ottawa river is not tidal, nor is the St Lawrence upstream of Quebec city.

The second selection written from the perspective of a British tourist is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Athabaska Trail,' published the year after his 'pleasure tour organized by the Canadian Government to promote western tourism'.²⁷⁶ Conan Doyle's poem describes his trip across the prairies by rail and the adventure of the 'Athabaska Trail'. The poem would resonate with both British and Canadian children brought up on the northern adventure tales of Henty and Ballantyne, although those expecting a Sherlock Holmes mystery would be disappointed. The version in the *Third Reader* includes only the final eleven lines of the original twenty-four line poem, which is somewhat clumsy, given the 'aabb' rhyme scheme.²⁷⁷ Interestingly, the missing lines convey a greater sense of both the Canadian wilderness landscape and adventure of the north; the remaining section speaks more to Canada's future, fulfilling the mandate of Doyle's sponsors to encourage tourism:

I'll dream again of fields of grain that stretch from sky to sky,
And the little prairie hamlets where the cars go rolling by,
Wooden hamlets as I saw them—noble cities still to be,
To girdle stately Canada with gems from sea to sea.
Mother of a mighty manhood, Land of glamour and of hope,
From the eastward sea-swept islands to the distant Western slope.²⁷⁸

Conan Doyle's poem is one of very few selections set in present-day Canada; most are stories of pioneers and explorers in the nineteenth century and earlier. Like the 'Empire Day' address and 'A Song of Canada' the poem refers optimistically to Canada's bright future.

²⁷⁴ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.pp.115-116.

²⁷⁵ Department of Education, *Ontario Teachers' Manuals - Notes on Ontario Readers*.p.71.

²⁷⁶ "A Case of Considerable Interest: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Canada," Toronto Public Library, http://ve.torontopubliclibrary.ca/case_of_considerable_interest/acd_part3.html.

²⁷⁷ "The Athabaska Trail!," The Conan Doyle Encyclopedia, http://www.sshf.com/encyclopedia/index.php/The_Athabasca_Trail#Editions.

²⁷⁸ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.pp.111-12.

‘Wildlife in Algonquin Park’ and ‘A Canadian Camping Song,’ are two selections set in the present day and the only pieces mentioning recreation in a Canadian context.

‘Wildlife in Algonquin Park’ appears only in the 1925 *Third Reader*.²⁷⁹ No general description is provided; the author assumes that the reader knows where Algonquin Park is located and has some idea of the purpose of Ontario’s Provincial Parks. Without a teachers’ guide for the 1923/25 *Ontario Readers*, it is impossible to know how this was explained to children; no notes accompany the story. The purpose of the story is wildlife observation, not detailed descriptions of landscape, yet it is notable that the narrator and his companions rapidly become part of the environment: ‘Almost the first thing we noticed about camping in Algonquin was how quickly our tent and its inmates, catching the tone and colour of the woods, seemed to melt into the wild life about them.’²⁸⁰ This familiarity and sense of being ‘at home’ in the wilderness extends throughout the story:

The second season revealed a fresh charm; it taught us the delight of greeting old friends, in flower and insect, bird and beast, about the camp, the island, and the lake. Paddle with what speed we might to open camp, our eager spirits left us far astern... we were soon so used to sleeping under canvas that, instead of sitting up tensely listening to every little rustling sound, we lay secure.²⁸¹

The poem, ‘A Canadian Camping Song,’ appears in both editions of the *Third Reader* and in readers of the 1950s and 1960s.²⁸² It reveals a similar sense of being ‘at home,’ describing the wilderness as ‘the summer home for me’ and ‘woodland glades are mine’. These two pieces, especially the poem, are the only *cheerful* Canadian selections, describing ‘pleasant days’: ‘With song and laugh and with kindly chaff/ We startle the birds above.’

With these exceptions, the Canadian landscape is constructed primarily as the site where pioneers of the distant past struggled to survive in the wilderness. This is the root of the connected metanarratives of Canadian national identity: survival and creating a home in the wilderness but the connotations are negative and surpassed by an underlying nostalgia for a ‘beautiful’ and ‘great’ Britain.

Inhabitants

²⁷⁹ Ibid. pp. 6-11.

²⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 6.

²⁸¹ Ibid. p. 8.

²⁸² Ibid. pp. 65-66.

Within the readers, the inhabitants include animals and humans, both European and Aboriginal. The selections are written primarily from British Canadian perspective: both French and Aboriginal peoples are distinctly Other. There are no mentions of Inuit ('Eskimos') and the First Nations ('Indians') have few interactions with English settlers, but are bracketed with French explorers and settlers in stories of the distant past. Because the French and First Nations are not directly connected to English Canadians within the *Second* and *Third Readers*, they do not play a significant role in constructing English Canadian identity in this section. There is no opportunity for comparison, for the English Canadian to be constructed as either superior or compassionate towards these Others, whereas the encounters with animal Others allow English Canadians to be portrayed as courageous or kind-hearted.

Within the *Second* and *Third Readers*, 'Canadians' are almost universally of British descent, with stories of British settlers dominating the few specifically Canadian selections. These pioneers are not, overall, positioned as seeking a better life for themselves and their families and making homes in the wilderness, but struggling to survive surrounded by ferocious wild animals, marauding Indians and treacherous French. The settlers are not directly linked to the children studying the readers; they are never referred to as 'our ancestors' and the stories are set in the distant past, the 'early days.' Most children would not be familiar with the wilderness setting of these stories as by 1911 over half the population of Ontario lived in urban settings.²⁸³ While these selections were probably included with a view to developing a sense of Canadian identity through stories of the past, the lack of specific textual links gives children no greater connection with these stories set in Canada than those set in Britain.

The Canadians in the *Ontario Readers* are not constructed as modern people; they are engaged almost exclusively in agriculture and live in rural or wilderness locations, a distinct contrast with Europeans, especially the British, which appear within the books. 'Great' is continually used in describing not only British locations but also inhabitants: 'Many great men have been born in Scotland, but few have done more for the world than James Watt.'²⁸⁴ The implication is that distinction is only to be found outside Canada, especially in Britain, that Canada and that its people lack 'greatness.' The 1923 *Second Reader* contains three tales of the Great War, all citing examples of heroism, including the British lad 'Jack Cornwell,' 'A Little French Heroine' and 'Story of a Red Cross Dog,' but contains no stories of Canadian

²⁸³ Canada, "Population Urban and Rural, by Province and Territory (Ontario)."

²⁸⁴ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Second Book*.p.189.

courage, with the exception of the 'brave little fellow' in 'An Adventure with Wolves.'²⁸⁵ Canadian bravery is illustrated only in stories of the distant pioneer past in the *Third Reader*, not the contemporary battlefields of the Great War.

The 'Empire Day' address firmly establishes for children the notion of 'race', a fundamental element in constructions of identity in early- to mid-twentieth century Canadian identity. Historian Philip Buckner notes that:

Imperial ideology... was central to the way men and women of all classes of English Canada (with remarkably few exceptions) viewed themselves—as members of an Imperial race whose institutions and culture were superior to all others. Their imagined community was Canada but Canada was itself part of a larger imagined community—the British Empire.²⁸⁶

The notion of a 'northern race' appears to have originated with 'Canada First' which Historian Jack Bumsted describes as a 'pan-national group' which appeared after confederation: 'Most of the imperialists believed that the distinctive Canadian character was a product of northern geography, severe northern winters, and the nation's inheritance of "northern races" connected to the northern races of Europe who had been the originators of the concept of "liberty."'²⁸⁷ The references to 'race' and 'stock' within the *Second* and *Third Readers* seems to refer to the British rather than the Canadian 'race' constructed by 'Canada First.' The 'mission of your race' referred to in Empire Day address' is likely the British race, as is the 'Great race, whose empire of splendour/ Has dazzled the wondering world!' cited in 'The Union Jack.'²⁸⁸

Historian John Darwin observes that one of the principal features of Imperial ethnicity was that the British character 'was energised by its encounter with the colonial environment, where virtuous attributes, long lost at home, could flourish anew... The Britons it made were 'Better Britons', a much improved version of the original model.'²⁸⁹ The concept of English Canadian pioneers as 'Better Britons' will be examined further in Chapters 4 and 5. 'A Song of Canada,' which appears in both editions of the *Third Reader*, expresses both the 'race' ('stock') and 'Better Britons' – the 'virtuous attributes' refers to by Darwin:

Search the earth over you'll find none stauncher,
Whether his hands be white or brown;
Come of a right good stock to start with,

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Buckner, "The Creation of the Dominion of Canada, 1860-1901." pp.81-82.

²⁸⁷ Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity." p.21.

²⁸⁸ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Second Book* p.184.

²⁸⁹ Darwin, "Empire and Ethnicity." p.97.

Best of the world's blood in each vein;
Lords of ourselves, and slaves to no one,
For us or from us, you'll find we're—MEN!²⁹⁰

The reference to the colour of hands—'white or brown'—must refer to indoor and outdoor occupations rather than pigmentation; as Darwin notes, whiteness is a part of definition of Britishness.²⁹¹

In 'Huts in the Wilderness,' Australian historian Jane McGennissen examines the role of the Australian pioneer in constructions of national identity in school readers. The Australian pioneer is 'white, male, heterosexual and heroic. He is the idealised pioneer, the youthful embodiment of the nation itself, a figure of strength and prosperity.'²⁹² The differing roles played by Canadian and Australian pioneers in constructions of national identity in schoolbooks will be examined further in Chapter 4, but it is worth noting here that within the *Second* and *Third Ontario Readers* it is the female pioneers that show the greatest bravery and determination, while the men serve a more utilitarian, enabling role. Of the five pioneer stories in the *Third Reader*, 'The Ride for Life,' 'A Forest Fire' and 'A Pioneer's Wife' centre on the courage of strong women; additionally 'The Heroine of Verchères' is the tale of a young girl who successfully defends the fort against attacking Indians. In contrast, the male settlers do not take charge in emergencies and some are positively cowardly. 'They Seek Their Meat From God' presents the only negative portrayal of a settler in the entire set of readers in this study. One man is described as:

A shiftless fellow who spent his days for the most part at the corner tavern three miles distant, had suddenly grown disgusted with a land wherein one must work to live, and had betaken himself... to seek some more indolent clime.²⁹³

The 'prosperous' settler 'cherished a hearty contempt for the drunken squatter' who lived alone with his child 'a mile or more from the nearest neighbour' in a 'miserable shanty', whereas the 'prosperous' settler lives with family in a 'substantial frame house in the midst of a large and well-tilled clearing. This story emphasises the role of women in pioneer life, with prosperity and success depending upon their presence. The role of women in making homes in the Canadian wilderness is the subject of 'Linoleum Caves' in Margaret Atwood's *Strange Things* and will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

²⁹⁰ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.p.294.

²⁹¹ Darwin, "Empire and Ethnicity."p.395

²⁹² McGennissen, "Huts in the Wilderness: Pioneering in School Readers."p.38.

²⁹³ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.p.215.

Darwin write that for British settlers, 'The fetters of class had been struck from their limbs. The relics of feudalism had no purchase there. Imperial Britishness was democratic, even populist.'²⁹⁴ Susannah Moodie's 'A Forest Fire,' demonstrates that the 'fetters of class' have not entirely disappeared in among British settlers in Canada, and her household is hardly 'democratic.'²⁹⁵ She gives the orders, referring to her help as 'the girl' and the 'man,' while they address her as 'mistress' and 'ma'am.' Both servants are depicted as stupid—the man had started the fire despite the dangerously dry conditions—and cowardly, 'whimpering', 'weeping silently' and 'crying aloud' in the face of danger, while Moodie herself remains 'calm'.

While women make homes in the Canadian wilderness, men have adventures, exploring, trapping and hunting. Most interestingly, within the *Second* and *Third Readers* the proponents of these adventure tales are almost all French, most notably Jacques Cartier and Pierre Radisson; the English Canadian male role models are dull and worthy settlers of the distant past. Children would doubtless find the exciting tales of British military valour, brave young soldiers and sailors far more romantic and inspiring than hard working pioneers carving farms in the wilderness. Earlier I cited Arthur Lower's claim that, 'It is not surprising that... those boys rushed off across the seas to fight for a country they had never seen'.²⁹⁶ This rush to arms may reflect not only a sense of loyalty and duty to Britain, but also a desire—and an opportunity—to escape from the tedious drudgery of the Canadian farm, possibly also an ambition to emulate the 'great' British inventors, engineers and statesmen portrayed in their readers.

Summary

The dominant identity constructed in the readers of this era is the British imperial ethnicity described by Darwin. This identity is strongly enforced through the use of British symbols and invented traditions, especially Empire Day, and the inclusion of numerous selections reflecting British life. The *Second* and *Third Readers* make no attempt to establish a Canadian identity through the landscape; this is not unreasonable as they are *Ontario*, not *national* readers. Geographically, Canada is limited to the St Lawrence basin and the topography is primarily inhospitable terrain; forests to be cleared by pioneers.

²⁹⁴ Darwin, "Empire and Ethnicity."p.97.

²⁹⁵ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.pp.223-227.

²⁹⁶ Lower, *Canadians in the Making*.pp.352-3.

In some respects, Canadians are portrayed as 'Better Britons' invigorated by the challenge of the northern climate and pioneer life, and yet their courage seems limited to the pioneer past with no mentions of contemporary bravery; culturally, Britain remains far superior. In the *Second* and *Third Readers*, both the French and the First Nations exist primarily outside constructions of Canadian identity, both Others of a distant past.

The Canadian national identity created by the imagined community of the *Ontario Readers* is constructed through a strong shared British imperial ethnicity and through the common act of reading precisely the same materials at the same time, as described by Anderson. There is no attempt to relate to other children outside the schoolroom; the members of the imagined community created by reading the same schoolbooks, singing the national anthem and celebrating Empire Day across the province remain anonymous. This imagined community spans two generations, that is a ten-year-old of 1909 could easily be teaching in 1919 from the same reader she used and her children, in turn, studying from the revised edition in the 1930s.

Chapter 4 1937-1950 'The Little Grey Book'

This chapter covers the readers used from 1937 until 1950, a period of considerable change in Ontario public school curriculum. First I describe the introduction of the *Programme of Studies*, the document that affected education in the province from 1937 to the 1970s. I then provide a description of the four readers that replaced the *Second* and *Third Ontario Readers*.

The four readers are the work of different publishers, and there is no continuity between the Grade Three reader, *Golden Windows*, and Grade Four *Gateways to Bookland* and the two *Treasury Readers* for Grades Five and Six. Therefore I have chosen to examine constructions of Canadian identity in the Grade Three and Four readers, under the themes of Symbols and legends, Landscape and Inhabitants, followed by the Grade Five and Six readers under the same headings.

The Programme of Studies - 'The Little Grey Book'

The most significant educational reform in Ontario took place during the Great Depression, the effect of which Stamp describes as 'a slowly advancing wave—turned back at the schoolhouse door with varying degrees of success... before sweeping over the educational scene in 1932-3,' reporting that 'between 1930 and 1934 total annual expenditures on schooling in the province dropped by one-third.'²⁹⁷ This hardly seems the time that the province would undertake educational reform, but while Ontario politicians had put child-centred education aside since the beginning of the century, they could not deny the force of the movement. Between 1928 and 1937 an extensive revision of the curricula of the schools was carried out in every province in Canada. Ontario was among the last to attempt the task, despite continuing requests and criticism from educators. Educator Patrice Milewski argues that while the 1937 pedagogical innovations in Ontario 'coincided with the social/ economic/ political crisis of the Depression... the transformations in curriculum and pedagogy are not reducible to these events.'²⁹⁸ By the mid-1930s Ontario was simply following educational trends in other provinces, most notably Alberta; several of the new readers authorized for use between 1937 and 1939 had been in use elsewhere in Canada since 1930. Here we see the influence of politics on education: historians Lemisko and Clausen note that it was 'only when

²⁹⁷ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*. p.143.

²⁹⁸ Patrice Milewski, "'The Little Gray Book': Pedagogy, Discourse and Rupture in 1937," *History of Education* 37, no. 1 (2008). p.110.

a new Liberal government ascended to power in 1934 under Mitchell Hepburn did the Department become more receptive to the calls for education reform.²⁹⁹

Aside from being compelled to revise the curriculum in order to keep in step with the other provinces, the education officials in Ontario, like those elsewhere, recognized that the whole concept of education was changing. It was now child-centred and activity-centred, rather than fact-centred. This child-centred approach was hardly innovative; the guiding principles were virtually identical to the short-lived New Education movement at the beginning of the century: 'New methods of instruction stressed learning by activity rather than memorization; correlation of the subject matter around the child's own widening experience;

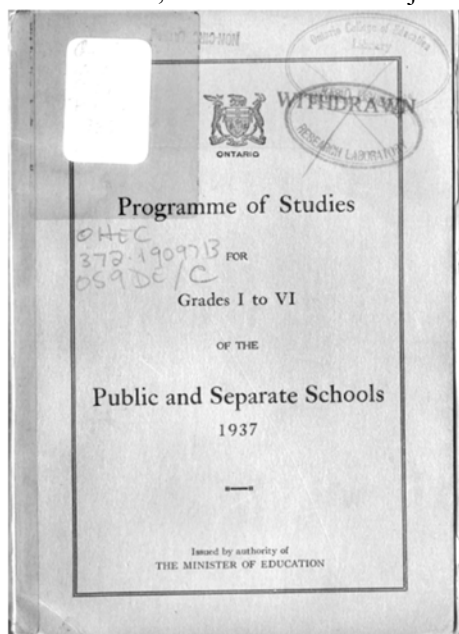


Fig.4.1 'The Little Grey Book'

enrichment of class-room study with material grown from the school's immediate neighbourhood; and the substitution of love for fear, and of interest for authority, in classroom discipline.'³⁰⁰ Violet Parvin notes that while the introduction of educational reform in Ontario was the 'result of an evolving process, their actual culmination in courses of study was rather sudden, with the appointment of Stanley Watson and Thornton Mustard as a committee to undertake the preparation of a course of study for Grades I to VI.' The committee was instructed to 'spare no efforts in compiling a course which would compare with the best and most advanced educational programmes anywhere.'³⁰¹ The result

of this process was the production of the 1937 *Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools*, one of the most important documents outside *Circular 14* in the history of education in Ontario.³⁰² The *Programme of Studies* establishes the curriculum goals for each year of school, suggesting approaches in every subject and delineating the material to

²⁹⁹ L. Lemisko and K Clausen, "Connections, Contrarities, and Convolutions: Curriculum and Pedagogic Reform in Alberta and Ontario, 1930-1955," *Canadian Journal of Education* 29, no. 4 (2006), p.1106.

³⁰⁰ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976.*, p.137.

³⁰¹ Parvin, *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario, 1846-1950.*, p.100-101.

³⁰² Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937."

be covered. The document was commonly referred to by teachers as '*The Little Grey Book*' (or '*Little Blue Book*'), so named for its coloured paper cover (Figure 4.1).

Educator Patrick Milewski explores the far-reaching effects of the 1937 *Programme of Studies* using the framework of Michel Foucault's observations on the way in which the document has 'supplanted the book as a site for the inscription of discourse,' in addition to Foucault's definition of 'rupture.' Milewski argues that '*The Programme* can be understood as signifying a fundamental transformation that broke with previously existing pedagogies that did not include a concept of the child or statements about how children learned. As a rupture in educational discourse, it conditioned or defined what could be said about teaching, learning, children and schooling for the greater part of the twentieth century.'³⁰³

The Little Grey Book had a far-reaching effect on education in twentieth century Ontario. The 1937 curriculum reform is referred to in the 1950 *Royal Commission Report* as 'one of the most revolutionary that has taken place in our educational system.'³⁰⁴ The Department of Education's 1968 *Living and Learning* states that: 'The Ontario *Programme of Studies for Grades 1 to 6*, first published in 1937, is the only official publication of the Department of Education which deals with aims deliberately and fully... The simple but startling truth is that virtually every idea in it... might have been expressed by educationally enlightened and advanced authors today.'³⁰⁵ The long-lasting effects were acknowledged in the 1995 Ministry of Education report, *For the Love of Learning*: 'As recently as 1967... the Department of Education's key policy document for education in Grades 1 through 6, stated that the aims of education, first promulgated in 1937, were still applicable.'³⁰⁶ Because the 1937 reforms led, among other things, to the introduction of the 'Enterprise Programme' and the content and style of the readers in use in Ontario from 1937 to the mid-1970s, the key points, especially those affecting the readers, are worth examining in some detail.³⁰⁷

One of the most significant innovations in the 1937 curriculum was the abandonment of standardized province-wide examinations in the junior grades. Teachers whose reputations—and, at least in smaller schools, salaries—had depended upon the number of

³⁰³ Milewski, "'The Little Gray Book': Pedagogy, Discourse and Rupture in 1937." p.92.

³⁰⁴ Ontario, "Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, 1950."p.19.

³⁰⁵ Department of Education Ontario, "Living and Learning : The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario," (1968)., p.65.

³⁰⁶ Ministry of Education Ontario, "For the Love of Learning," (1995)..p.6.

³⁰⁷ The 'Enterprise Programme' is also referred to as the 'Enterprise Method' and 'Enterprise System.'

‘passes’ their students achieved were now told that: ‘In June as in September the children should be enjoying new experiences and engaging in new activities instead of merely reviewing old “facts” for the sole purpose of reproducing them on an examination.’³⁰⁸ Teachers were also granted considerably more latitude in the material presented to the pupils:

In many of the courses as outlined the teacher is asked to select topics that will prove interesting and useful to the children in his class. It is obvious that the same topics will not be appropriate to a mining area in Northern Ontario, to an agricultural district in the Western Peninsula, and to an industrial district like Toronto or Hamilton... For this and other reasons it is strongly urged that each teacher choose for himself the topics around which to centre the experiences and activities of his children.³⁰⁹

Another change was that instead of being taught in ‘forms’ with readers covering two years, children were now placed in ‘grades’ covering a single year. The previous Form Three had included children aged eight and nine at the beginning of the school year, and they used the *Ontario Readers Second Book*. This now translated into Grades Three and Four, with each grade having its own reader (Appendix I).

A third significant innovation was the introduction of the new interdisciplinary Social Studies programme, which replaced traditional Geography and History classes.

The purpose of the course in Social Studies is to help the child understand the society in which he lives and the duties and responsibilities of its members to one another. Since the nature of that society is largely influenced by its physical environment the course is partly geographical, and since it is fully understood only in the light of its past the course is partly historical. The emphasis throughout is on the social aspects of life in the child’s community and other communities, present and past. Thus the course may be regarded as a blending of geography, history, and citizenship.³¹⁰

The main difference between Social Studies and the traditional History and Geography courses of earlier years was that students were now to learn about their world, past and present, through ‘enterprises.’ The term ‘enterprise’ was chosen to differentiate from the American schools which referred to ‘projects.’ According to the Minister of Education, ‘Almost any topic might serve as the core of an enterprise, around which to centre activities of all kinds, culminating in a pageant, a play, an exhibit.’³¹¹ Lemisko and Clausen report that ‘when the “Grey Book” [*Programme of Studies*] came out in Ontario in 1937, it gave little instruction on how to execute the integrated programme. Beyond general discussions of the importance of a unified

³⁰⁸ Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937." p.10.

³⁰⁹ Ibid. p.9.

³¹⁰ Ibid. p.58.

³¹¹ Ibid. p.59.

curriculum, it provided no details about the workings of the project method, nor stipulated specific enterprise ideas.³¹²

The Enterprise Method required that additional materials were consulted besides the standard textbooks. No textbooks were provided for the new Social Studies programme; pupils were expected to make use of books from the extensive lists provided in the *Programme of Studies*.

The success of the work in Grades III, IV, V, VI depends largely upon teacher and children having ready access to suitable books. It is hoped that the children, as well as the teacher, will look up and report to the class interesting bits of information regarding life in other lands and other times. In all their creative work, too, the children should learn to seek in books authentic information relating to language, costumes, etc. To assist teachers in building up a suitable supply of books for the Social Studies, fairly long lists of carefully selected books have been prepared.³¹³

But many schools simply could not provide these extra books. Although not required by legislation until 1950, many school boards already provided the readers for their pupils, at least in the junior classes. These local boards depended largely upon property taxes for their operating budgets and even as Ontario was emerging from the Depression, many ratepayers remained unemployed, especially in rural areas. Although Ontario was becoming increasingly urbanised, numerous one- and two-room schools still operated, especially in rural and Northern Ontario. These boards were required to provide a full set of new readers to children in Grades One to Six in 1937 and Grades Seven and Eight in 1938; the penalties for not using authorised books included the removal of the provincial funding so vital to the operation of small rural schools. With these costs imposed directly or indirectly on parents and school boards, the shelf-loads of new books for Social Studies often could not be afforded.

Parvin reveals the problems faced by many schools in implementing the new curriculum, noting that 'in the years that followed the curriculum revision, there was great confusion about the lack of a textbook in social studies in the upper grades of the elementary school,' citing the *Ontario School Inspectors' Association Report* that:

So many books are required to cover the various topics of the course, that their cost is great, and, at the same time, it is impossible to have sufficient copies of each book to enable all pupils to read the stories independently...

³¹² Lemisko and Clausen, "Connections, Contrarities, and Convolutions: Curriculum and Pedagogic Reform in Alberta and Ontario, 1930-1955."p.1109.

³¹³ Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937."p.60.

The plight of the inexperienced teacher faced with the need of preparing lessons in Social Studies for all grades is not a happy one.³¹⁴

Milweski has compiled a fascinating oral history documenting teachers' reactions to the demands placed upon them by *The Little Grey Book*.³¹⁵ The very title, "'I Paid No Attention To It'", reveals the attitude of many classroom teachers when encountering the new methods prescribed by the 1937 reforms.

While the new authorised readers may not have consistently represented the intentions of the *Programme of Studies*, they actively enforced—and supported—the Enterprise Method. The books designed for Grades Three to Six include suggestions for activities related to the individual stories, from painting murals and making scrapbooks to producing a pageant. While most of the activities involve writing, there are also numerous projects involving the use of maps and model-making, and children are encouraged to consult history and geography books, as well as reading beyond the textbook itself. Rather than memorising and regurgitating dates and 'facts,' children were now expected to learn history and geography through creative dramatisations and artwork. All four readers include plays for performance, with details on how to research costumes and construct scenery. In the absence of Social Studies textbooks and extensive resources to support the new curriculum, including public and school libraries, the readers were the teacher's basic tools.

The influence of the 1937 committee extended far beyond the production of the 1937 *Programme of Studies*. Thornton Mustard, a member of staff at the Toronto Normal School (teachers' training college), was appointed as its principal in 1938.³¹⁶ Watson was Principal of Keele Steet Public School in Toronto, later taking the role of series editor for the *Highroads to Reading* series, in use in Ontario from 1950 to 1967.

Description of the 1930s Readers

The new readers that appeared in classrooms from 1937 were commonly referred to as the 'Treasury Readers,' although only the Grade Five and Six books were actually part of the six volume *Treasury Readers* series for the elementary grades, first published by Macmillan Co. and Ryerson Press in 1932. The 1937 *Circular 14* authorised readers selected from the

³¹⁴ Brief submitted to the Royal Commission on Education, No. 88, 1948, cited in Parvin, p.104.

³¹⁵ Milewski, "'I Paid No Attention to It': An Oral History of Curricular Change in the 1930s."

³¹⁶ "'The Little Gray Book': Pedagogy, Discourse and Rupture in 1937."p.103.

offerings of different publishers: the *Primer* (in use from 1933) was published by the T. Eaton Company, *A Garden of Stories* (Grade Two) and *Gateways to Bookland* (Grade Four) by Copp Clark Co., *Golden Windows* (Grade Three) by Thos. Nelson & Sons, *The Treasury Readers, Books V and VII* by Macmillan Co. and Ryerson Press (Appendix I). The Grade Seven and Eight books, *Life and Literature, Books I & II*, were produced by a combination of Educational Book Co., Thos. Nelson & Sons, and W.J. Gage.³¹⁷ The *Second Book* was approved in 1937 Circular 14, while the 1938 Circular 14 does not include any *Ontario Readers*, noting that the readers for Grades Three and Four are ‘in preparation.’³¹⁸ The copyright date for *Gateways to Bookland* is 1938 and *Golden Windows* is 1939; both are named in the 1939 *Circular 14*.³¹⁹

It is possible that the primary reasons for the commissioning of books from different sources were political and economic, spreading the highly lucrative schoolbook contracts among a number of different Ontario-based publishers, rather than purely pedagogical. However, the choices may have also been aesthetic and academic; for example, *Gateways to Bookland* is more attractively presented, with larger type and more illustrations than the *Treasury Reader* for Grade Four, while actively supporting the Enterprise Method prescribed for the schools of the day. *Golden Windows* has particularly charming illustrations, includes explanatory notes for pupils and reveals a distinct effort to include Canadian place names in introductions and notes.

Taxpayers are left in no doubt as to the cost of the schoolbooks. On the title page of each 1937 reader, under the Ontario Coat-of-Arms and authorisation by the Minister of Education, the price is printed, with the following advisory: ‘The price printed on this book does not represent the total cost, as an additional sum is paid to the publisher by the Department of Education.’³²⁰ The printed prices were: Grades Two to Four, 20 cents; Grades Five and Six, 25 cents; and Grades Seven and Eight, 30 cents. In 1936, even an unskilled (male) factory worker earned a minimum of 20 cents an hour, so the cost of a reader was certainly within

³¹⁷ Parvin, *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario, 1846-1950*. p.109.

³¹⁸ Department of Education Ontario, "Circular 14: Text-Books Authorized and Recommended and Text-Book Regulations for Public, Separate, Continuation and High Schools and Collegiate Institutes," (Toronto: T.E. Bowman, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1938).

³¹⁹ Ontario, "Circular 14 Text-Books Authorized and Recommended and Text-Book Regulations," ed. Ontario Department of Education (Toronto: T.E. Bowman, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1939).

³²⁰ This phrase appears on the first pages of all the Grade 2-6 readers authorised in Ontario from 1937.

reach of any employed person, although many school boards provided readers for children in the junior grades.³²¹

The new Grade Three and Four readers each contain 288 pages; the Grade Five and Six readers have 354 and 380 pages respectively. The books are of similar dimensions to the *Ontario Readers*, and vary in thickness from 2.0 to 2.5 cm. While 1937 readers maintain (or increase) their weight, the book designers worked to create a very different impression from the dull and dense *Ontario Readers*. Unlike the plain red covers embossed with a maple leaf design, bearing the Ontario provincial coat-of-arms and 'Authorized' stamped in bold black print, the new books have pictures of people on their covers. *Golden Windows* and *Gateways to Bookland*, the Grade Three and Four books, have numerous black-and-white and two- three-colour illustrations, clearly intended to enhance the text, and illustrated end-papers which, although in similar styles, do not seem to relate directly to the contents of the reader. The two *Treasury Readers* are more sober in appearance befitting the advanced ages of their ten to twelve-year-old readers and contain few illustrations, mainly black and white line drawings, engravings or wood-cuts although a few have details picked out in pinky-orange. These illustrations, the work of well-known Canadian artists, are suited to the text.

Popular children's fiction available in Canada during World War II and through the 1950s was outwardly similar in appearance to books printed earlier in the century. Due to war-time restrictions, both British and American children's popular fiction published in the early 1940s was printed on thin paper with a high pulp content similar to thick newsprint; even when new, the paper had a rough appearance and today these books are brittle and the pages 'tanned.' The cardboard covers were also of poor quality. The readers were, again, denser than storybooks of the time, and printed on higher-quality paper, with far more internal illustrations, particularly in the books for Grades Three and Four.

Historian Robert Stamp considers that in the new readers, 'there was considerably less story material from the "great" authors of the past, and a much stronger appeal to children's interests,' but most of the material is not purpose-written but compiled from other works.³²² The Acknowledgements pages suggest a heavy reliance on materials used in American readers of the era and some selections may have been included based upon availability of copyright. The illustrators are listed in the Acknowledgements and each book is provided with a Contents

³²¹ Statistics Canada, "Canada Year Book," (1937). p.782.

³²² Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976.*, p.168.

section, listing the authors. Canadian authors are listed separately below the Acknowledgments in the *Treasury Readers V and VI*, but not indicated in the Grade Three and Four Readers which have less than a dozen selections by well-known Canadian authors. The readers include a dictionary with the explanation and pronunciation of words included in the text that might be unfamiliar. By Grade Three, children were expected to read independently and look up unfamiliar words.

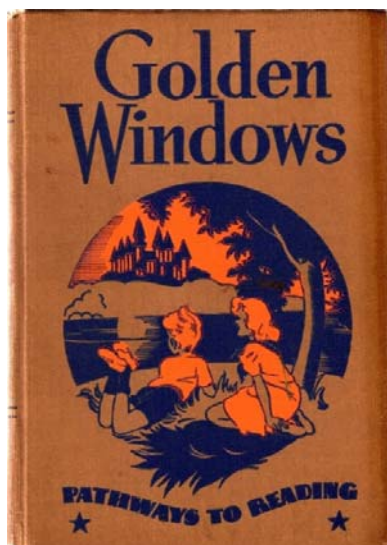


Fig. 4.2 *Golden Windows*

Golden Windows was produced by Thos. Nelson & Sons for use in Grade Three (children aged eight at the beginning of the school year). The book is divided into seven sections of approximately equal length. The contents seem to have been selected to appeal to a child's imagination; traditional fairy tales and legends, and whimsical poems describing the beauties of nature predominate. Of the ninety-one individual selections, only four stories feature contemporary children in realistic situations. In keeping with the Enterprise System and child-centred teaching, most of the selections have brief introductions, either placing the story in context or suggesting activities, and are also followed by suggested

activities for the class or individual pupils. Rather than attempting to spread stories through the reader to fit the academic year, seasonal and holiday selections are collected in the final chapter, 'Highdays and Holidays.' In keeping with the activity-centred pedagogical principles of the 1930s, four plays are included for classroom performance. This represents a real departure from the *Ontario Readers* which do not contain any plays or activities, although some teachers may have adapted selections as dramatic readings. According to *The Programme of Study*: 'The course in Grade III makes use of the child's interest in children of other lands to take him in imagination to a number of countries in different parts of the world, where he may view the daily lives of children in other lands.'³²³ The book is beautifully illustrated with pictures that relate to the selections. Approximately 25% of the 285 pages feature pictures; most printed with three colours.

Gateways to Bookland is the Grade Four reader, intended for children ages nine and ten, published by The Copp Clark Company (Figure 4.3). It is not identified as being part of a

³²³ Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937."p.70.

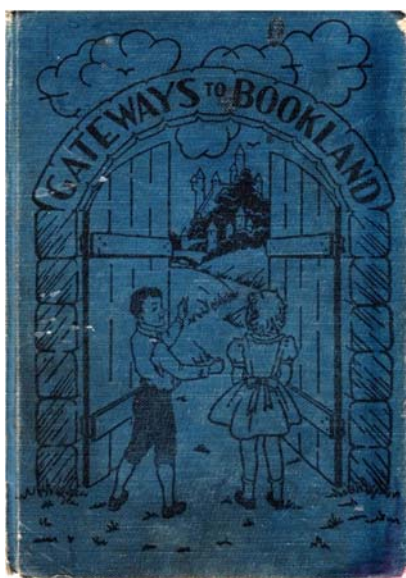


Fig. 4.3 *Gateways to Bookland*

reading series. The book is divided into seven sections of similar length. Of the ninety-eight selections, only twelve poems and stories are reality-based. Six are about contemporary children; three are tales of early days in North America and the remaining three are set in Europe. In keeping with the activity-centred programme, two plays and two songs are included. The first illustration features the two children, approaching the same gate (as seen on the cover) which is closed. A sign points 'To Bookland'. The Introduction tells the young readers that, 'Those who visit other lands often keep a diary. In it they write of the places and people they liked the most,' and suggests that children should keep a 'travel record' of the books they encounter 'in

the land of poems and stories.'³²⁴ This travel theme is not revisited until the penultimate section, 'Beyond our Horizon.' Approximately 20 percent of the 284 pages are illustrated; approximately half the illustrations are printed in three colours.

While the contents of *Gateways to Bookland* actively reinforce the Enterprise System, they do not support the 'Social Studies Programme for Grade IV':

The aim of the course in Grade IV is to give the child some understanding of the growth of social living and of the factors which have shaped it towards its present form... In examining the daily life of primitive peoples of the polar regions, the tropics, the desert, and of those who live on the fringes of the civilized communities of the temperate regions, the child may be led to a vivid realization of the relationship between geographical environment and mode of life. The idea of the dependence of people on one another, and of the necessity for co-operation in order to maintain existence will be strengthened as the child views life under the rigours of the Arctic or the inhospitable desert.³²⁵

While *Gateways to Bookland* includes stories from 'other lands', there is no specific section covering Canada. This fits with the *Programme of Studies* requirement that children learn about the rest of the world before studying Canada but does not provide a cohesive link between *Golden Windows* and the *Treasury Readers - Grade Five*.³²⁶

³²⁴ *Gateways to Bookland*. (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1939)., pp.6-7.

³²⁵ "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937." pp.69-70.

³²⁶ *Ibid.* p.58.

The Treasury Readers- Grade Five and Grade Six, the final two volumes in the Ryerson Press *Treasury* series published in 1930 but not introduced in Ontario until 1937, are intended for children aged ten to twelve (Figures 4.4 and 4.5). The illustrators listed in the Acknowledgements in both books include well-known Canadian artists Paul Kane, C.W. Jefferys, Clarence Gagnon, and Henry Sandham as well as textbook illustrators Edith MacLaren, 'and others,' demonstrating editor Lorne Pierce's principle of promoting Canadian writers and artists.³²⁷ Canadian authors are also listed in the Acknowledgements. The *Treasury Reader - Grade Five* is presented in ten parts, while the Grade Six book follows a similar structure, with eight parts. Each of these sections is subdivided into groups of three to six selections around a single theme. While the individual stories and poems have introductions, usually placing the piece in context, the suggestions for 'enterprises' and other activities which followed the stories in the Grade Three and Four readers are replaced with 'Helps to Study.'

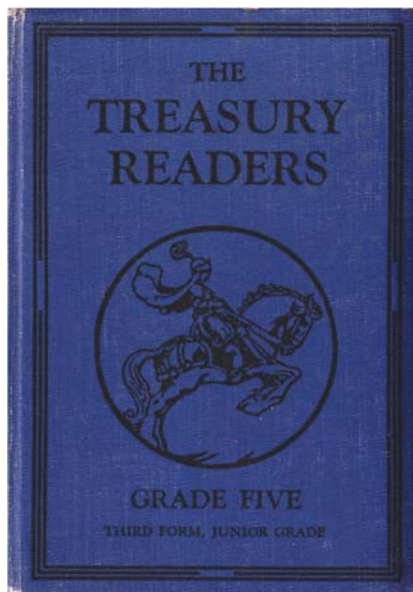


Fig.4.4 *The Treasury Readers Grade Five*

Like the 1909 and 1925 *Ontario Readers*, contents of the Grade Five and Six readers are dominated by traditional stories, myths and legends from European and North American cultures, and excerpts from *The Bible*. The classics of English literature are reflected in works by Dickens, Defoe, Hawthorne, William Shakespeare, Scott, Browning, Ruskin, Tennyson and many others. The books contain fewer poems than their predecessors; the poems are sprinkled through each unit and are not differentiated in the Contents. The books contain fewer fanciful raptures on the beauties of nature and anthropomorphised animal 'friends' than the readers authorised for the earlier grades; 'Stories of the World

at Work' and 'The Workaday World,' 'Little Journeys Abroad,' 'Travel and Adventure' and 'The Age of Chivalry' dominate. 'Canada, Our Homeland' and 'Our Dominion' are the final sections in the two books.

³²⁷ Sarah Campbell, "From Romantic History to Communications Theory: Lorne Pierce as Publisher of C. W. Jefferys and Harold Innis," *Journal of Canadian Studies-Revue D Etudes Canadiennes* Fall 1995 (1995).

The *Grade Five* book does not actively support the aims of the Social Studies course: 'In Grade V the child follows the great discoverers as they enlarge the world, and profoundly influence social life in their own lands and in the "new" lands.'³²⁸ While numerous historical legends and stories, and the well-worn 'Jacques Cartier' poem are included, there are no reality-based stories about explorers of other lands than Canada.³²⁹ The *Grade Six* book includes a number of accounts of early explorers and settlers in Canada, in keeping with the Social Studies intention that, 'Having discovered the world, the child, now in Grade VI, proceeds to discover Canada, and to understand the beginnings of social life in various parts of Canada.'³³⁰

There are no records of manuals to accompany the 1930s Grade Three and Four readers in the Ontario Textbook Collection archives, and it is possible that none were published. Both *Golden Windows* (Grade Three) and *Gateways to Bookland* (Grade Four) contain background information for pupils, as well as classroom and individual activities for most selections; a teacher would not require additional information to interpret the simple stories and poems for young pupils. *The Treasury Manual – Grades IV-VI* is a single volume divided into sections for each grade. The page numbering starts afresh with each section, suggesting that they originally appeared as single volumes. Additionally, the three sections are very different in tone and content and, as three authors are listed, it is likely that each section was written by an individual. As *The Treasury Readers - Grade IV* was not authorised for use in Ontario, I have not reviewed that section of the manual.

In its four-page introduction, the *Grade V* section asks: 'What should a study of the selections in *Reader V* do for the pupil?' answering that, in addition to developing 'an appreciation for a story that is well told,' and sensitivity to 'the latent beauty in the world around him... It should lead him to admire all things that are honourable and of good report and arouse his contempt for actions that are mean and cruel.'³³¹ To the question 'How should the teacher play his part?' the *Manual* is primarily concerned with 'enthusiasm' for sharing literature and 'creating a suitable atmosphere;' there is no suggestion that the readers should develop an interest in Canada or citizenship. The *Grade VI* section does not mention the

³²⁸ Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937." p.58.

³²⁹ The poem by Thomas D'Arcy McGee (a Father of Confederation) appears in each successive generation of readers from the 1880s.

³³⁰ Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937." p.58.

³³¹ C.D. Wootton, B.C. Diltz, and C. Bremner, eds., *The Treasury Manual - Grades IV - VI*, The Treasury Readers (Toronto: Ryerson Press and Macmillans in Canada, 1932)., p.6.

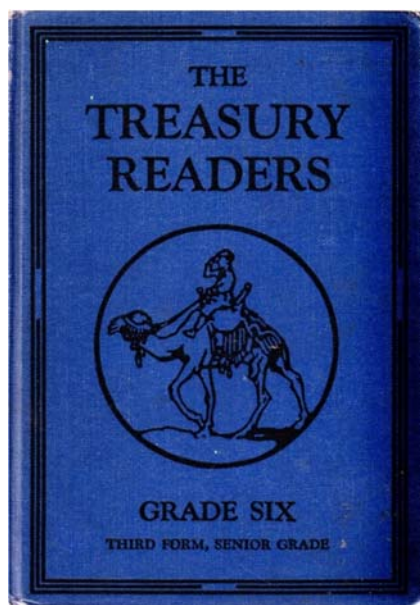


Fig. 4.5 *Treasury Readers Grade Six*

qualities of the teacher or the purpose of *The Treasury Readers*, but simply reviews different approaches to teaching reading and the use of a library, again with no mention of patriotism or creating an interest in Canada. The teacher would find the specific pedagogical intentions of the Minister of Education outlined in the *Programme of Studies* which first appeared in 1937, as discussed earlier.

The *Grade V* section of *The Treasury Manual* is somewhat confusing. To the question ‘What may a perusal of this *Manual* do for the teacher?’ the reply is: ‘It should help him to get a fuller understanding of the selections, by forcing him to probe each one for its

fullest meaning,’ noting that, ‘The running questions in the *Manual* are addressed to the teacher, not the pupil.’³³² However, these ‘running questions,’ listed under each selection as ‘Class Activities,’ read suspiciously like examination or test questions and it is possible they were used as such. *The Treasury Readers* themselves contain considerable background information, additional readings and questions on each selection in ‘Helps to Study’ section (*Grade V*) and ‘Study and Enjoyment’ (*Grade VI*). Despite the guiding principles of the Enterprise Programme which was introduced along with these readers in 1937, there are few classroom activities suggested in either the *Manual* or the readers themselves.

‘Jacques Cartier,’ the final selection in the *Grade V* section of the *Manual*, shows a radical departure from the simple lists of questions provided as ‘Class Activities’ noted above. Here the teacher is provided with a detailed script to follow when introducing this poem, complete with explanations, commentary and stage directions:

The wharves are full of bearded sailors who have seen much of the world, and love to talk about what they have seen. One of the things they talked about all the time was a westward road across the ocean to the riches of China and India. (Show map of the world.) Down to the wharves every day goes a lad called Jacques Cartier. What do you suppose takes him there? ...And now the time passes on. (Reads to end of first stanza.) What time of year have we reached?³³³

³³² Ibid. Grade V, pp.6-9.

³³³ Ibid. Grade V, pp.56-58. Parentheses in original.

This is the only detailed prescriptive treatment offered in *The Treasury Manual*; as will be seen, some of manuals produced to accompany the readers of the 1950s and 1960s offer similar scripted approaches to classroom instruction.

For the purposes of this project, the primary value of the pre-World War II teachers' manuals is that, unlike their successors, their only stated purpose is teaching children to improve their reading comprehension and enjoyment of a wide range of literature. They reveal no interest in the development of Canadian identity or, indeed, any purpose beyond teaching reading skills to children aged eight to twelve.

The next sections in this chapter examine constructions of Canadian national identity in the readers authorised from 1937 to 1950. I will first examine *Golden Windows* and *Gateways to Bookland*, the readers for Grades Three and Four, followed by the *Treasury Readers - Grade Five* and *Grade Six*. The first two, created by unrelated publishers, are very different in form and content to the *Treasury Readers* series.

Golden Windows (Grade Three) and Gateways to Bookland (Grade Four)

These two readers are not supported by teachers' manuals; the introductory notes and related activities accompanying most selections give clues as to their intended use. The selections are presented in themed units, none specifically about Canada; the few selections identified as set in Canada are sprinkled throughout the books. The purpose of the readers is to present selections of high interest to children ages eight to ten, with a view to encouraging them to read independently and there is little concerted attempt to inculcate a sense of Canadian identity.

Symbols and myths

In *Golden Windows*, ties to the British Empire are limited to the 'National Anthem – God Save the King', which appears opposite the title page, and 'A Princess Becomes a Queen', the story of Queen Victoria learning she has acceded to the throne: 'She was queen—ruler of a great empire. Her lands stretched far over the sea, and her people lived in every part of the globe.'³³⁴ The tradition of Victoria Day is explained: 'Every year we honour her memory by observing

³³⁴ *Golden Windows*. Pathways to Reading (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1939).p.281.

as a holiday Victoria Day—the twenty-fourth of May, the day on which she was born.’³³⁵ Interestingly, the ‘great empire’ is referred to only in the past tense and tradition of Empire Day, formerly celebrated on the Friday before Victoria Day, has vanished from the readers. In *Gateways to Bookland*, the sole reference to British monarchy consists of a photograph of the young Princess Elizabeth playing with her corgis.

‘O Canada!’ appears opposite the title page in *Gateways to Bookland*, according it the position of a national anthem.

O Canada! Our home and native land,
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North, strong and free;
And stand on guard, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.³³⁶

The song establishes the concept of Canada as ‘north’, but this is not enforced elsewhere within these two readers. It is likely children would see the anthem as simply a statement of loyalty to one’s country.

The two readers contain no overt symbols of national identity, such as flags, except for a microscopic Union Jack flying beside the schoolhouse in the illustration for ‘Vacation Time’ the final selection in *Golden Windows*. While two stories about beaver are included, the animal is not referred to as an emblem of Canada.

‘The Maple Tree’s Story’ presents an imaginary conversation between the Maple and Horse-chestnut trees in a school playground.³³⁷ The selection establishes the maple leaf as an emblem of Canada, with the simple statement: ‘my pretty green leaf is the emblem of Canada,’ with no explanation given within the text. The symbol is enforced with the refrain of ‘The Maple Leaf Forever’, one of English Canada’s favourite patriotic songs of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries:

The maple leaf, our emblem dear,
The maple leaf forever.
God save our King, and Heaven bless
The maple leaf forever.³³⁸

³³⁵ Ibid.p.281.

³³⁶ *Gateways to Bookland*.p.4.

³³⁷ Ibid.pp.83-86.

³³⁸ Ibid.p.84.

This is the sole mention of the highly popular patriotic song in the readers used before 1950 and it may be significant that the opening verse, as cited by Daniel Francis in his descriptions of Empire Day celebrations, is omitted from this story:

In days of yore, from Britain's shore
Wolfe the dauntless hero came
And planted firm Old England's flag
On Canada's fair domain!³³⁹

This omission seems to mark a distancing from the British imperial ethnicity that dominates the earlier *Ontario Readers*. Moreover, rather than speaking of British explorers and settlers in Canada, the Maple tree tells her companion:

“And, do you know, it is really more than four hundred years ago, since a great man sailed from a country far across the seas, and landed on the shores of our country. That man's name was Jacques Cartier, and he came from the little seaport of St. Malo in France.”³⁴⁰

By crediting Cartier's achievement—and omitting the verse about Wolfe the ‘dauntless hero’ planting ‘Old England's flag’—‘The Maple Tree’ clearly acknowledges the role of French in the early days of Canada. This selection opens the possibility of constructing a Canadian national identity based upon a bicultural heritage rather than the purely British imperial ethnicity expressed in the *Ontario Readers*. This attempt at a more inclusive Canadian identity may be because, unlike the *Ontario Readers*, these textbooks were intended for use outside that province. Both readers include a modest (under 2 cm) Ontario coat-of-arms on the title page, along with the ministerial authorisation and cost; presumably this title page changed, depending on the province.

Landscape

The two readers feature numerous illustrations of rural and woodland scenes, but very few specific locations are given and different regions of Canada are not represented. In *Golden Windows* attempts are made to refer to Canadian locations in the notes, despite there being no location given in the selection itself; for example, the introduction to ‘Moon Song’: ‘Near Vancouver there is a mountain that looks like two lions. In Muskoka there is a tree that looks like an old man with an umbrella.’³⁴¹

³³⁹ Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History*.p.65.

³⁴⁰ *Gateways to Bookland*.p.86.

³⁴¹ *Golden Windows*.p.71.

There is little to mark most of the locations as distinctly Canadian. The contemporary reality-based stories focus on plot, and, to a lesser degree, character; while they could be set anywhere in North America or, indeed, Britain or Australia, these indeterminate locations might be considered Canadian by default. Stories set in ‘other lands’ are clearly defined in the opening paragraphs and through illustrations of exotic vegetation and animals, for example, ‘A Letter From India’ begins: ‘In this story a father, who has travelled to India, writes a letter to his children, Tom and Kate, in Canada.’³⁴² The suggested activity highlights differences between Canada and India: ‘It is not likely that Hugh was ever in Canada. Write him a letter, telling him of all the things about a Canadian city or a Canadian farm that you think would be strange to him.’³⁴³

Most present-day stories are located in the safety of the small town or family farm. The two specifically urban stories portray the city negatively: a runaway goat finds he is not welcome and a lost puppy is terrified by the busy traffic; the city’s ‘gray streets’ are contrasted with flower-filled meadows in the poem, ‘Canada’s Child.’ The stories of human characters located in recognizable Canadian wilderness settings are set in the distant past.

There is no explicit attempt to create a sense of Canadian national identity through the landscape. Except for the reference to the ‘True North’ in ‘O Canada!’, the description provided in ‘the Maple Tree’s Story,’ and a few animal stories, there is no impression given of a contemporary Canadian wilderness and this dominant element of Canadian national identity is largely absent from these two readers. In contrast to the *Ontario Readers* described in Chapter 3, Canada is presented in an attractive light and the nostalgia for Britain has all but disappeared. ‘The Maple Tree’s Story’ refers to children listening to a story about ‘their beautiful country—Canada’:

“They heard about the great high mountains, and the wonderful forests... the broad prairies, the large lakes, the long rivers, and the deep mines far down in the earth.”³⁴⁴

This is very similar to the second verse of ‘O Canada!’:

O Canada! Where pines and maples grow,
Great prairies spread and lordly rivers flow.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Ibid. pp.232-234.

³⁴³ Ibid. p.234.

³⁴⁴ *Gateways to Bookland*. p.85.

³⁴⁵ Ibid. p.4.

‘The Maple Tree’s Story’ marks the first reference to Canada’s natural resources, the ‘deep mines’, but this theme does not reappear in the readers authorised from 1937-1950.

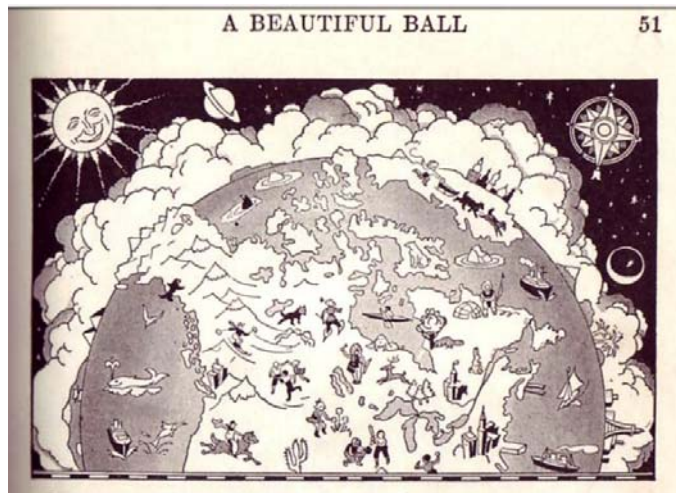


Fig. 4.6 ‘A Beautiful Ball’ *Golden Windows* p.49.

While ‘A Beautiful Ball,’ a fanciful description of the world, does not mention Canada, the story is illustrated with a map of the northern hemisphere centred on Canada.³⁴⁶ Stylized mountains suggest the Rocky Mountains, while trees represent the forests in Northern Ontario. The scenes fringing the globe make no

attempt at geographical accuracy with pyramids shown in the west and domed temples north-east of Greenland. Tiny figures represent ‘typical’ activities, with dog teams and kayaks in the north, a feathered Indian hunting deer with a bow-and-arrow in the west and folk-dancing in the prairies, while a stylised sun beams down. The story appears early in the reader and for some pupils would likely be the first formal encounter with a map in a school textbook.

Other selections suggest more accurate methods of locating stories set in Canada: ‘In one of the books in your classroom library, you will find a map of Canada. On the map find the place where you live. Away to the north find the cold land where the Eskimos live. From that land came the story of “The Man Who Did Not Like Music.”’³⁴⁷ Rather than creating national identity, the landscape simply serves as a background for the characters. For example, ‘In The Far North’, a detailed account of Eskimo life, is accompanied by an illustration of a treeless shore backed by large rocky hills.³⁴⁸

Given the overall lack of specific Canadian locations in the two readers, the occasional use of real place names adds authenticity to pioneer stories. For example, in ‘A Baby’s

³⁴⁶ *Golden Windows*.pp.49-51.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*p.107

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*p.236.

Adventure', the father returns from 'taking his furs to Fort Garry.'³⁴⁹ The implication is that these tales are 'true' in contrast to contemporary fictitious stories where only general locations are given, such as 'a farm' or 'the city.' The isolation of settler families is emphasised: 'It was fifteen miles to the nearest town, and though he went on horseback, he could not get home before evening.'³⁵⁰

'Rescued By Radio' is an unusually modern story, with its plot based entirely upon technology.³⁵¹ Rags the dog listens regularly to a particular radio programme with the family, barking in response to Nero, the dog in the broadcast. When Rags is lost in the 'heavy traffic of downtown city streets,' he is rescued by the radio announcer and taken to a 'tall building... The elevator whizzed them up, up, up, into a beautiful room where there were several one-legged round things that people in the room called microphones.' The announcer tells a story, Nero barks on cue and Rags barks on-air in response. The listening family recognises his bark, 'Mr. Jacobs telephoned the broadcasting station at once' and the happy reunion takes place.

This selection is one of very few in all the readers in this study that takes place entirely in an urban environment and the only story in the pre-1950s readers that positions Canadians as living happily in a modern industrial society. While the city's 'heavy traffic' and 'rushing automobiles' are terrifying—and dangerous—to the small dog, the tall buildings house delights such as the whizzing elevator and 'beautiful' broadcast studio. The tale is not only dependent upon broadcast technology, it also demonstrates the increasing role of technology in Canadian life, with references to automobiles, elevators, telephones and microphones, and is the first mention of radio in the readers in this study. Children studying *Gateways to Reading* would be familiar with the radio, which played an important role in Canadian homes from the 1920s, creating imaginary communities of listeners across the country.³⁵² School broadcasts, which began in Canada in the Maritime Provinces in the 1920s, were introduced in Ontario in the 1940s.³⁵³ Their role in creating Canadian national identity will be discussed in Chapter 5 where radio plays are frequently used as methods of instruction, particularly in dealing with Canadian topics; here it is only necessary to note that children would be familiar with the

³⁴⁹ Ibid.p.116.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.p.246.

³⁵¹ *Gateways to Bookland*.pp.107-112.

³⁵² CBC/Radio Canada, "The Early Years: 1920-1939," http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/history/1920-1939_details.shtml.

³⁵³ Richard S Lambert, *School Broadcasting in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963).

medium, as illustrated by the suggested activity of creating a radio play: 'Join with your teacher and classmates in choosing the scenes and characters, and in writing the speeches.'³⁵⁴

Inhabitants

British imperial ethnicity is established as a part of Canadian national identity, not only through numerous classics of British culture, such as Robin Hood, but also in the unit 'Other Lands Than Ours,' introduced by the RL Stevenson poem 'Foreign Children' written from a British perspective.

Little Indian, Sioux, or Crow,
Little frosty Eskimo,
Little Turk or Japanee,
O! don't you wish that you were me?...
You have curious things to eat,
I am fed on proper meat;
You must dwell beyond the foam,
But I am safe and live at home.³⁵⁵

This somewhat smug British ethnic superiority continues in 'A Letter From India' written by an English Canadian father to his children at home. He describes Indian clothing as 'funny'— 'you would smile if you were to see how they are dressed.' 'You would be amused to see the people carrying great heavy burdens on their heads.'³⁵⁶

'Canada's Child' provides an introduction to the theme of multiculturalism, a cornerstone of late twentieth-century Canadian national identity.³⁵⁷ This poem appears in each successive generation of readers, defining 'Canadians' – British, French, New Canadians and First Nations. The poem speaks from a British settler perspective, with English Daphne described as 'our older sister', enforcing, or perhaps creating, the stereotypes of Others in the minds of the young readers.

The poem begins 'Are you Canada's child?' then invites each child by name: 'Come then, little Ellaf' or 'Ileana', 'Matsumoto', 'Sonia'. The child's country of origin is established—'You are from Iceland'—or simply suggested—'from your deep hidden valleys'. Some characteristic of their homeland is established, for example courage for Iceland, and the

³⁵⁴ *Gateways to Bookland*.p.112.

³⁵⁵ *Golden Windows*.pp.215-216.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid*.pp.232-234.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid*.pp.282-284.

‘gift’ the child brings to Canada is suggested: ‘Do you bring music?’ The first four children are newcomers to Canada; three seem to be from northern Europe and one from Japan. Each verse suggests the children come from places with rich history: ‘They dared the wild waves a thousand years ago’ ‘old embroideries’ ‘old mountains’ ‘the old land’.

The poem suggests that Canada is culturally inferior to the ‘old lands’, referring to Canada as ‘so big’ and ‘plain’. While Canada may have meadows with ‘bright flowers’, her streets are ‘gray’, in contrast to the ‘whitewashed cottage with the thatched roof,’ ‘waterfalls and temples’ of older civilizations. Canada’s ‘cloth is new’, lacking both colour and detail in contrast to the ‘shining silk’, ‘tapestries’ and ‘old embroideries’. Resident Canadians lack the skills to create these crafts with their ‘clumsy hands’ and lack of attention to detail. The poem emphasises the artistic heritage—music and crafts—of newcomers to Canada, rather than the political, religious, language and other cultural differences. This emphasis on the artistic ‘gifts’ that newcomers bring to Canada persists throughout the readers of the 1950s and 1960s, creating a simplistic, yet optimistic view of multiculturalism based largely on folklore. This privileging of European and Japanese arts, crafts and music in the formation of Canadian identity over those of the British and French settler societies—and Aboriginal peoples—is at odds with the international promotion of Quebec and Nova Scotia crafts as part of a distinctly Canadian identity through the 1920s, as described separately by Lorna Senechal Carney and Ian McKay, while Christopher Tait writes of Canada’s exhibitions at the British Empire Exhibition (1924-25), including the art of the Group of Seven, who gained international acclaim through this period.³⁵⁸ ‘Canada’s Child’ continues to appear in the readers of the 1950s and 1960s, well after the establishment of the Canada Council for the Arts and other organizations promoting indigenous Canadian cultural heritage.

The next stanzas refer to earlier settlers in Canada. As noted, Daphne is positioned as ‘our older sister’ with her ‘clear English gaze’ while Scottish Bruce has been ‘our strength from the beginning’—the Irish are noticeably absent, despite a significant presence in Canada. The verse suggests British superiority, especially when contrasted with French Yvonne, who is not allotted any attributes beyond longevity: ‘You have been Canada’s child for three

³⁵⁸ Lorna Senechal Carney, "Modernists and Folk on the Lower St Lawrence: The Problem of Folk Art," in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); Ian McKay, "Handicrafts and the Logic of 'Commercial Antimodernism': The Nova Scotia Case," *ibid.*; Christopher Tait, "Brushes, Budgets, and Butter: Canadian Culture and Identity at the British Empire Exhibition, 1924-25," in *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, ed. Phillip Bruckner and R. Douglas Francis (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006).

hundred years.’ The Aboriginal child, ‘Running Wolf’, is also diminished as ‘little brother’, in contrast to the English ‘older sister.’

The poem conveys a strong sense of loss, of exile, asking: ‘Will you be strong and brave in your new home?’ and ‘Do you bring dark songs in your heart, the songs of those who loved their country/ And were driven away?’ Despite Canada’s meadows where children might gather ‘bright flowers’, the land holds secrets only an Aboriginal person—Running Wolf—can unlock: ‘Will you tell us what the wind means when it blows in the autumn? Will you show us the ways of the forest?’ Curiously the poem conveys no sense of a bright future. The final verse simply answers the opening question by asserting: ‘You are all Canada’s children now’, then asks: ‘What do you bring to her in your small warm hands?’ Giving children responsibility for contributing to Canada recalls the emphasis on personal responsibility for Canada’s ‘bright future’ emphasised in the ‘Empire Day’ address in the *Third Reader*. This is the first suggestion that newcomers bring ‘gifts’ to Canada, a theme that persists throughout the next generations of readers. The poem expresses a distinct sense of something missing in Canadian culture, a hole that needs to be filled through the age-old traditions of newcomers.



Fig. 4.7 ‘A Fire in the Backwoods’, *Gateways to Bookland*, p.176

Again the servant, the ‘new hired girl’, is stupid—the blaze is caused by her ignorance—and although less cowardly than her counterpart in the earlier story, she is obviously of no use in an emergency. It is ten-year-old Katie and her mother who save the younger children and family’s possessions. Both show calm, courage and persistence in the face of danger, typifying the pioneer women of the pre-1950s readers. A strong woman is also the heroine in ‘A Baby’s Adventure,’ which establishes the French presence: ‘In the early days of the West, a French-Canadian family named

The tales of hard-working pioneers suggest that there is little time for cultural activities. ‘A Fire in the Backwoods’ is a modern adaptation of a story by Susannah Moodie, with the language greatly simplified for young children (Figure 4.7). The selection has numerous similarities to Moodie’s ‘A Forest Fire’, which appears in the *Ontario Readers - Third Book*.

Again the servant, the ‘new hired

Lajimodière settled on the plains. Madame Lajimodière was the first white woman to live on the prairie.³⁵⁹

Within these two readers Canada's Aboriginal people are treated very differently. The Inuit, while distinctly Other, live in present-day Canada, as established in 'In the Far North,' a first-person present-tense account of Eskimo life: 'Sitsak, the Eskimo, greets us at the door of his toupig.' (Figure 4.8).³⁶⁰ The selection is a highly detailed report of Eskimo life, including descriptions of clothing and activities, from an anthropological perspective; within the account there is no interaction between the (presumed) white observer and the Eskimo. The piece concludes: 'Many Eskimos live far away where they have never seen a white man. But those who live on the mainland of Canada are often visited by explorers and trappers, and have learned more of the ways of the white man.' The stereotype of the 'happy Eskimo' is established: 'Summer is a merry time for the Eskimo children... Friend or stranger is made welcome in the Eskimo's tent.'

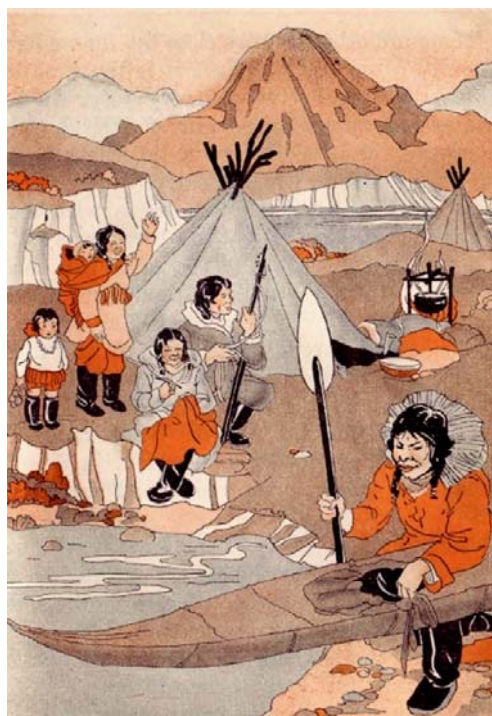


Fig. 4.8 'In the Far North', *Golden Windows*, p.237.

In contrast, the First Nations are positioned as unfriendly people of the distant past; their encounters with both British and French pioneers are entirely negative, serving mainly to reinforce the courage of the settler ancestors. 'The Jack-O'-Lantern' portrays Indians as an always-present danger: 'Sam was a boy who lived in a log cabin in great woods that were full of Indians', yet easily scared by a child's jack-o'-lantern, as demonstrated in the picture of adult Indian 'warriors' running away in terror.³⁶¹ 'A Baby's Adventure' is illustrated with a picture of a large stern Indian woman stealing a baby from a frightened child. The introduction states that: 'Our country has many stories of adventures with Indians' implying that the Indians in these 'adventures' are likely

³⁵⁹ *Golden Windows*.p.113.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*236-241.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*p.247.

to be dangerous enemies, kidnappers of small children.³⁶² The suggested activities instruct children to examine the picture and ‘find five things that show that the story is about “the early days.” Find three ways in which the artist has shown that the woman is an Indian.’ This activity both establishes First Nations as people of the distant past and creates stereotypes of ‘Indian’ appearance and character, while affirming the superiority of European settlers.

The sole reference to First Nations in *Gateways to Bookland* is an ‘Indian Lullaby’ with accompanying music, found in the ‘Long Ago’ unit.³⁶³ The stylized silhouette illustration shows two children in fringed and feathers costumes, a canoe on a lake and a woman sitting beneath a papoose hanging from a tree. The illustration style matches the endpapers, which include an Indian child and dog or wolf and tepees. The inclusion of the music and suggestion that children might ‘sing it with delight many, many times’ seems to be an invitation to ‘play Indian.’

Golden Windows and *Gateways to Bookland* contain no stories of scary encounters between dangerous animals and settlers; the sole interactions between humans and wild animals consist of observing muskrats and taming chickadees. Anthropomorphised animals, including ‘Flat Tail the Beaver’, abound, but these are not constructed as symbols of Canadian national identity. Large animals are rendered safe through personification, as in Ernest Thompson Seton’s ‘Grumpy Loses a Fight’: ‘Johnny is a spoiled bear cub who lives with his mother, Grumpy, in a western park, where animals are hunted only with a camera.’³⁶⁴ While this selection highlights the role of conservation areas in preserving the habitat of wild animals, it does not contribute to constructions of Canadian identity.

Treasury Readers -- Grade Five and Grade Six

The *Treasury Readers* are different in both form and content to *Golden Windows* and *Gateways to Bookland*. The books are more sparsely illustrated than those for the younger grades, with less than ten percent of the pages illustrated. Although a few pictures are enhanced by a single colour, most are simple line drawings; the overall appearance is dull and grey. However, the print is larger than the *Ontario Readers –Third Book* and the paper is thicker. All the selections are extracts from larger works, mainly classics of English literature or well-

³⁶² Ibid.pp.113-116.

³⁶³ *Gateways to Bookland*.pp.252-53.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.p.165.

known tales, or complete in themselves; none appear to be purpose-written for inclusion in a school reader—or for children’s magazines, as is the case in both *Golden Windows* and *Gateways to Bookland*. While the teachers’ manual describes teaching methods rather than the contents of the readers, most selections have introductory notes, providing a context and background information about the author. The questions included at the end of each selection as ‘Helps to Study’ in *Grade Five* and ‘Study and Enjoyment’ in *Grade Six* remind children that they are reading for a purpose. The contents, especially the final units on Canada, reflect series editor Lorne Pierce’s well-publicised interest in Canadian history.³⁶⁵

The materials are presented in themed units, with the final unit in each reader on Canada: ‘Canada, Our Homeland’ in *Grade Five* and ‘Our Dominion’ for *Grade Six*. Additional Canadian stories are spread among the other units. Several Canadian selections used in *Ontario Readers Second and Third Books* reappear. These include ‘A Pioneers’ Wife,’ the poems ‘Jacques Cartier,’ and ‘The Nancy’s Pride’; and the animal stories, ‘They Seek Their Meat From God,’ by Charles GD Roberts, and Ernest Thompson Seton’s ‘Mother Partridge,’ now retitled ‘Redruff’.

Symbols and Myths

In keeping with the imperial theme introduced by the Union Jack frontispiece in the *Ontario Readers*, a photograph of the reigning monarch serves as the frontispiece of each *Treasury Reader*. My copy of the *Grade Five* reader features ‘His Majesty King Edward VIII in the uniform of Colonel-in-Chief of the Seaforth Highlanders’ and the 1943 imprint of the *Grade Six* book shows a much-decorated ‘His Majesty King George VI’ in full military regalia.

While strong ties with Britain remain, there is no vestige of the British militarism that dominated the *Ontario Readers*. No patriotic poems reflecting military glory are included and beyond a few minor skirmishes, battles only take place in the distant past in foreign lands, for example, ‘The Fall of Troy.’ This may be a distancing from Canada’s losses in the Great War or it may reflect the age of the pupils. British cultural heritage is strongly enforced with classics including several Robin Hood stories, a unit on ‘The Age of Chivalry,’ extracts from Scott and Ruskin, and poems by Browning, Tennyson, and Wordsworth, among others, although Thomas Hughes’ ‘Hare and Hounds at Rugby’ might be considered a strange choice for

³⁶⁵ Campbell, "From Romantic History to Communications Theory: Lorne Pierce as Publisher of C. W. Jefferys and Harold Innis."

inclusion in a Canadian schoolbook. A number of American authors are included, notably Emerson and Longfellow; their contributions are overshadowed by six selections by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Rudyard Kipling's 'The Children's Song' is the first selection in 'Canada, Our Homeland,' the final unit in the *Grade Five* reader. The poem opens with: 'Land of our Birth, we pledge to thee/ Our love and toil in the years to be' and concludes: 'O Motherland, we pledge to thee,/ Head heart and hand through the years to be.' Because the reader was used in Canadian schools, pupils would assume that the 'Land of our Birth' means Canada rather than England, and there is nothing within the poem to contradict this assumption. This could be considered an example of continuing British Imperial ethnicity, although the poem does not directly extoll the glories of the Empire but is a prayer asking for the qualities of good citizenship. 'Dear Land of All My Love,' the poem introducing the final 'Our Dominion' unit in the *Grade Six* reader, is an undefined pledge of patriotic loyalty by American poet Sidney Lanier. 'The Young Citizen' unit in *Grade Five* has no Canadian content; the book concludes with 'The Athenian Youths' Pledge' but no attempt is made to relate this to Canadian children's lives.

No overt symbols of Canada appear in these readers, no flags, anthems, maple trees, beavers or Mounties. The sole patriotic poem, 'There's a Thing We Love,' suggests that merely thinking of 'Canada' is sufficient to warm us 'through the bitter winter hours':

And the pride thrills through and through us,
'Tis our birthplace, Canada.³⁶⁶

Two longer, more explicitly patriotic versions of this poem appear in later readers and will be discussed under Symbols in Chapter Six.

'Jacques Cartier', by Canadian Thomas D'Arcy McGee, probably better known as a Father of Confederation, is the penultimate selection in the *Grade Five* reader. Despite the extremely detailed and prescriptive treatment of this selection in the *The Treasury Manual – Grades IV-VI*, there is no clear explanation that Cartier claimed the new land in the name of France.

In the forests of the North; ---while his townsfolk mourned his loss,
He was rearing on Mount Royal the *fleur-de-lis* and cross.

³⁶⁶ Lorne Pierce, ed. *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*, The Treasury Readers (Toronto: Ryerson Macmillan, 1936).pp.329-30.

The teachers' manual ignores the '*fleur-de-lis* and cross', simply comparing the images suggested by the text; 'Here are two sides of your picture—Old France and New. What was happening in each place?'³⁶⁷ A similar line appears in the final verse:

He told them of the glorious scene presented to his sight,
What time he reared the cross and crown on Hochelaga's height.³⁶⁸

This second reference is completely disregarded in the manual. This English Canadian erasure of the French claim to Canada is typical within the readers of this study, which gloss over—or omit—any conflict between the French and English, including the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. Here it is important to remember that these are *readers*, not history books, so a complete chronology of the history of Canada might not be expected.

Landscape

A very limited physical description of Canada appears in the patriotic poem, 'There's a Thing We Love.'³⁶⁹ This version includes only the first two verses of the poem, which are essentially descriptions of the Canadian climate. The first verse extolls the agricultural beauties of sunny orchards and meadows: 'the grain-fields flaunt their riches,' while the second describes winter climate, the 'biting north winds.' There is no overall sense of Canadian topography, no descriptions of Canada 'from sea to sea', although some descriptions of regional landscapes are included, for example, the 'small lonely island in the Gulf of St Lawrence' in 'The Keeper of the Light' and the 'tumult of water, foaming among ledges and boulders' in 'The Heroes of the Long Sault.'³⁷⁰ Arthur Heming provides similar graphic descriptions in 'Shooting the Rapids,' an exciting first-person present-tense account of adventure in the North.

'Jacques Cartier' presents the Canadian landscape from a visitor's perspective, relating his adventures and giving his impressions of the new land to his eager audience on his return to France.³⁷¹ Cartier's famous description, 'the land God gave to Cain' does not feature in the poem, which deals more with climate, more than topography, contrasting the land in winter, 'hard, iron-bound, and cold' with 'the magic wand of summer.'

³⁶⁷ C.D. Wootton, B.C. Diltz, and C. Bremner, eds., *The Treasury Manual - Grades Iv - Vi*ibid. (Ryerson Press and Macmillans in Canada, 1932).p.57.

³⁶⁸ Lorne Pierce, ed. *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*ibid. (Ryerson Macmillan, 1936).p.347.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.p.329-30.

³⁷⁰ *The Treasury Readers: Grade Six*.p.358; ibid.p.370.

³⁷¹ *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*.pp.344-47.

‘The Axe of the Pioneer’ by Irish-born Canadian poet Isabella Valancy Crawford, appears multiple times in each generation of readers used from 1937 to the 1970s.³⁷² The poem tells the story of transformation of wilderness into civilization:

High grew the snow beneath the low-hung sky,
And all was silent in the wilderness...
“For every silver ringing blow
Cities and palaces shall grow! ...
When rust hath gnawed me deep and red,
A nation strong shall lift its head!”

The poem concludes: “‘We build up nations—this my axe and I!’” The poem supports the settler approach to the Canadian wilderness: the forests must be cleared and the useless land made productive.

The *Treasury Readers* include no descriptions of urban life in Canada; all the Canadian prose selections are either wilderness adventures or accounts of farming in rural communities. In contrast, many of the European selections are set in cities including London, Vienna and Paris. Additionally, with the possible exception of the Arthur Heming stories set in the distant wilderness, none of the selections about Canada are set in the present-day; all are historical, set in the nineteenth century or earlier, leading to a decidedly antimodern construction of Canadian national identity.

Inhabitants

While Britain’s greatness is emphasised through numerous tales of its inventors, including Caxton and Newton, Canadians are relegated to rural agricultural occupations, as evidenced by ‘The Turnip-Hoeing Match,’ and ‘Human Nature in Turkeys,’ among others. The trope of making a home in the wilderness appears in both *Treasury Readers*, including, ironically, ‘The Women of the West’ in the ‘Our Dominion’ unit of the *Grade Six* reader. The introduction states: ‘George Essex Evans is an Australian poet. His song of brave women is equally true for our Dominion and his.’³⁷³ This statement is not entirely true, according to Jane McGennissen’s examination of the same poem in 1928 Australian school text, *The Victorian Reading Books, Eighth Book*. There the poem is accompanied by an illustration of a lonely woman watching a figure on horseback in the distance; according to McGennissen, ‘The hut and the woman in her bonnet and apron are the last signs of civilisation, domesticity and of

³⁷² Ibid.pp.333-334.

³⁷³ *The Treasury Readers: Grade Six*.pp.356-57.

‘nation’ before the wilderness begins again.³⁷⁴ In the Australian readers, the male pioneer is dominant, the woman is ‘conveniently co-opted into the white masculinist legend.’³⁷⁵ This is very different to the strong pioneer women who dominate stories of early settlers in Canada, as discussed in the previous chapter. In the *Grade Five* reader, ‘A Pioneer’s Wife’ makes another appearance, while the *Grade Six* reader includes the story of the young women who help ‘The Keeper of the Light’ operate the lighthouse through the long months of spring storms.

With the exception of the narrator of the two Heming adventures set in the far north, the English Canadians in the *Treasury Readers* are settlers and farmers, whereas the French are primarily explorers and adventurers, with stories such as ‘The Heroes of the Long Sault’ incorporated into the Canadian fabric. The adventurers and traders, French and English, enjoy a very different relationship with the Aboriginal people, who are companions in wilderness adventure, in comparison to the settlers defending their farms.

Like many stories of explorers in the readers, ‘Radisson’s First Voyage’ emphasises the hero’s extreme youth, making it an excuse for his foolhardy actions and bravado.³⁷⁶ In the colourful account, Radisson is captured by the Indians and children are treated to the details of his torture: ‘The one passion of the savage nature is bravery.’ The Indians are impressed by Radisson’s courage, he is adopted by the tribe and transformed into an Indian. After a feast wherein the delicacies and costumes are described in detail, adopted by the tribe ‘Pierre of Three Rivers became Orimha of the Mohawks.’ Different versions of this story appear in later readers. From the perspective of the British settler, French and Indians are considered equally Other, evidenced by the fact that Radisson has no difficulty transforming himself into a Mohawk. Interestingly there is no mention of Radisson as a founder of the Hudson’s Bay Company, probably one of the most influential organisations in constructing the Canadian nation.

In contrast to the approaches to Aboriginal people in *Golden Windows* and *Gateways to Bookland*, in the *Treasury Readers* Eskimos are depicted as figures of fun in ‘A Very Exceptional Eskimo’ or shown to be unreliable and cowardly in comparison to Europeans in ‘The Bear That Hunted the Hunter’, whereas the First Nations are accorded more respect as

³⁷⁴ McGennissen, “Huts in the Wilderness: Pioneering in School Readers.” p.42.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.p.41.

³⁷⁶ Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Six*.pp.346-55.

fellow adventurers, especially in 'Radisson's First Voyage' and 'Shooting the Rapids': 'At the head of one of the great rapids, Ooo-koo-hoo, seeing that I mated well with one of his crew, invited me to take a paddle and help them through.'³⁷⁷ Here the First Nations are shown as facilitating the Europeans' adventures, worthy of mutual respect.

Three First Nations legends are included in the *Grade Six* reader. The first, 'How Corn was Given to the Indians,' by American writer Rhoda Power, appears in later readers. The premise is that the 'wandering' Indians are given the gift of corn and can then abandon roaming the forests in the hunter-gather traditions, settle down and raise crops, effectively becoming farmers.³⁷⁸ The implication is that 'wandering' is purposeless and agriculture provides a more reliable source of food, seemingly the imposition of European values on Aboriginal tradition. It is not clear whether the story is a genuine myth or simply a story told in the tradition of the First Nations.

The second legend, 'Glooskap's Country,' is described as a 'Tale of the Mic-Mac Tribe in the Maritimes' and 'When the Snow Came' is 'A Tale of a West Coast Tribe.'³⁷⁹ The inclusion of these two myths in the 'Our Dominion' unit suggests an incorporation of Aboriginal lore into Canadian heritage. 'Glooskap's Country' first appeared in Cyrus Macmillan's *Canadian Wonder Tales*, based upon his academic studies of folk tales. Macmillan states his purpose in publishing the tales: 'That the children of the land may know something of the traditions of the mysterious past in which their forefathers dwelt and laboured.'³⁸⁰ The incorporation of Aboriginal legends into the Canadian national identity is positioned as distinctly antimodern:

Canada is a country with a romantic past... The traditions and tales of our country's past are rapidly disappearing in its practical present, and the poetry of its former times is rarely heard above the hum of its modern life.³⁸¹

The antimodern trend continues in the units on 'Stories of the World at Work' and 'Workers and their Work.' Here again, Canadians are constructed as outside modern industrial society, involved only in agriculture with no representatives in the 'Invention' section occupied by Marconi, Newton and Caxton.

³⁷⁷ *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*.p.337.

³⁷⁸ *The Treasury Readers: Grade Six*.pp.72-77.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid*.pp.333-341; pp.342-346.

³⁸⁰ Cyrus MacMillan, *Canadian Wonder Tales* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1918). Introduction.

³⁸¹ *Ibid*.

The *Treasury Readers* include few stories of encounters between animals and humans. ‘They Seek Their Meat From God’ is repeated. ‘The Bear That Hunted the Hunter,’ by Arctic explorer Vilhjalmur Stefansson, a tale of adventure in the Canadian Arctic, does not serve to construct Canadian national identity.

Summary

Throughout the readers authorised in 1937, the materials on Canada are unrelated. The Grade Three and Four Readers are evidently designed to support the new Enterprise system rather than building Canadian national identity; while the *Treasury Readers* conclude with units on Canada, the stories are all set in the distant past.

Children are not given a cohesive picture of the Canadian landscape or its inhabitants within the texts and there is no attempt to develop an imagined community of ‘children just like you’. Although a handful of the stories in *Golden Windows* and *Gateways to Bookland* are the adventures of contemporary children, these are Canadian by default in that no other nationality is specified and their activities could take place elsewhere.

Overall, Canada is constructed as past, not present, and as an agricultural rather than modern society. The readers endorse the metanarrative of building a home in the wilderness and the *Treasury Readers* additionally construct the wilderness as a site for adventure. With ‘Canada’s Child’ we see the introduction of multiculturalism which will become a cornerstone of Canadian national identity in the late twentieth century.

The British militarism of the *Ontario Readers* has vanished, but the British imperial ethnicity remains, bolstered by the inclusion of numerous British classics and a sense of British cultural superiority. As we will see, the lack of Canadian national identity is actively addressed by the next set of readers, published in 1946-47 and authorised in Ontario for the 1950/51 school year.

Chapter 5 Readers of the 1950s:

‘A healthy vigorous intelligent Canadianism’³⁸²

This chapter examines four series of readers published between 1946 and 1947, and authorised in Ontario for the 1950-51 school year. Instead of a single prescribed textbook for each grade, Ontario school boards could now select from these four sets of readers, all very similar in both form and content. The readers are designed to support changes in elementary schools created by the progressive learning systems introduced in the 1930s, grouping Grades Four to Six as the ‘Junior’ grades, and providing a cohesive progression through these grades.

I begin with a summary of the report leading to the change in readers. I follow this with a physical description of the textbooks and accompanying teachers’ manuals. The teachers’ manuals include strong declarations about creating Canadian national identity through the readers. I begin by discussing these statements before analysing the contents of the readers under the principal themes of Symbols and Myths, Landscape, and Inhabitants.

Report of the Royal Commission on Education and the ‘The Porter Plan’

The Enterprise Method at the core of mid-1930s education in Canada was short-lived. George Robert Stamp reports that the new ‘Progressive Conservative’ party ousted the social democratic Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in 1943.³⁸³ Almost immediately a Royal Commission was appointed to study the education system in Ontario, including textbooks. The 1937 readers were blamed for children’s lack of attainment in other subjects: ‘the traditional type of instruction has failed to teach many children to read effectively... and has not fostered a love in many children for that great heritage of literature which has been bequeathed to all children through the ages.’³⁸⁴ Stamp summarises the back-to-basics sentiment in post-War Ontario:

A war-weary public felt comfortable with a party that stressed class-room discipline and factual learning and restored Empire Day, the cadet movement, and religious education to their ‘rightful places’ within Ontario schools... Once again an Ontario premier had used educational issues to excellent political advantage. Drew’s landslide victory in the 4 June [1943] election marked the death knell of the 1937 curriculum changes. It would have

³⁸² Barrett, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*.p.xv.

³⁸³ The Progressive Conservative party remained power in Ontario for 42 years until 1986.

³⁸⁴ Royal Commission on Education, cited in Parvin, p. 118.

additional important implications for Ontario's post-war educational system.³⁸⁵

The Royal Commission on Education in Ontario was appointed by a provincial Order-in-Council in March, 1945. After five years of investigation and deliberation, the Commission's 970 page Report was finally delivered in December, 1950. In late 1949, possibly driven by the urgent need to replace the textbooks designed to support the repudiated Enterprise System, the Minister of Education Dana Porter pre-empted the release of the Commission's report. Parvin reports that, 'In December, 1949, the first of a series of official publications on curriculum came out with an outline of the "Porter Plan."'³⁸⁶ Changes to textbooks included:

The authorization of the readers at present in use for Grades I to VI will be discontinued as of June 30, 1950.

Permissive use of readers for Grades I to III (Primary Division) and Grades IV to VI (Junior Division) listed in the attached schedule is approved...

Pupils will not be required to buy these books.

School boards will be required to provide readers in numbers sufficient for the use of the pupils. One basic reading series should be selected. Boards should make their selection after consultation with teachers, principals, and inspectors concerned... A sufficient number of books from other series to provide supplementary reading may be chosen if desired. Books will be retained in the school and, with proper care should last many years.³⁸⁷

Parvin explains that, 'Since the results of this research [for the Royal Commission] were embodied in textbooks which were already on the market, it was suggested that these books be used.'³⁸⁸ This clarifies Porter's pre-emptive approval of the four series of readers published in 1946 and 1947 for use in the 1950/51 school year. (See Appendix I) 'Permissive use' meant that school board could choose from among the 'approved' readers rather than being required to use the single 'authorised' book for a particular grade.

When finally released in December, 1950, the Commission's 933 page Report did not include detailed curriculum content or textbook reform, but focused primarily on organizational change, from classes to regional school boards, for example: 'The programme of each division should be organized as a unit in which the pupil spends three years, there being no promotions or failures within it... The Junior division would include Grades Four,

³⁸⁵ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*. p.182.

³⁸⁶ Parvin, *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario, 1846-1950*. p.119.

³⁸⁷ Ibid. p.120

³⁸⁸ Ibid. p.110

Five and Six.³⁸⁹ In fact, the textbook publishers had already defined these three years as a single pedagogical unit and created sets of readers that provided continuity of style and content from Grade Four to Grade Six.

Politicians had campaigned on a ‘back-to-basics’ philosophy, and the Report acknowledged that ‘in some subjects... the [enterprise] method may be extremely wasteful of the time of both teacher and pupils, especially in later stages of the educational system,’ while continuing on to endorse the use of Enterprise Method in the Junior Grades: ‘Nevertheless, the principles of the project or enterprise method should be utilized as far as possible by the teacher in an elementary school.’³⁹⁰ The readers approved for use in Grades Four to Six from 1950 to the mid-1970s all seem designed expressly to support the principles of the Enterprise Method, and ‘projects’ or ‘enterprises’ are suggested throughout the accompanying teachers’ manuals.

Description of the 1950s Readers

Four different series of readers were approved for use in Ontario during the 1950/51 school year; a table is provided as Appendix I. These readers were produced in 1946 and 1947 and used in other provinces before being approved for ‘permissive use’ in Ontario.³⁹¹ Each series is the product of one publishing company and each had an editor-in-chief or series editor. Each series included three readers intended for use in Grades Four, Five and Six; the *Canadian Reading Development Series* took children from Grade Four to Grade Eight.

While school boards before 1950 had no choice in the readers used in individual schools, with the choice of four approved series, pricing became a significant factor. *Circular 14* included (and continues to include) the prices of each book. (Figure 4.1) shows the prices published in Circular 14 for the 1950-51 school year. The fifty- to sixty-cent difference between the Grade Four reader in the *Highroads to Reading* series and the other books for the

³⁸⁹ Ontario, "Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, 1950."p.81.

³⁹⁰ Ibid. p.110.

³⁹¹ While *Up and Away*, the Grade 4 book in the *Highroads to Reading* series is dated 1946, *Over Land and Sea* (Grade 5) and *On the Beam* (Grade 6) are undated. The Ontario Historic Collection catalogue dates both as ‘1950?’ possibly because that is the first year they were authorised for use in Ontario. As the Ministries of Education would require samples of the full text before approving a series, it is probable that the two books were published in the same year as *Up and Away*, or possibly the following year. The teachers’ manual for *Wide Open Windows* is dated 1948 and for *All Sails Set*, 1949; typically the manuals were published a year or two after the readers. Within this study I have used 1946 as the publication date for the series.

same grade would likely have played an important part in the schools' decision-making process and may indicate a marketing ploy to guarantee the success of the series.

JUNIOR DIVISION		
Canadian Parade Readers (J. M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Ltd.)		
Grade IV	Young Explorers	\$1.50
Grade V	Gay Adventurers	1.65
Grade VI	Proud Procession	1.70
Canadian Reading Development Series (Copp Clark Company)		
Grade IV	Up and Away	\$1.50
Grade V	Wide Open Windows	1.70
Grade VI	All Sails Set	1.70
Highroads to Reading (Thos. Nelson & Sons (Canada) Ltd.)		
Grade IV	Riding with the Sun	\$1.00
Grade V	Over Land and Sea	1.40
Grade VI	On the Beam	1.40
New World Readers (Ryerson Press-Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd.)		
Grade IV	Over the Bridge	\$1.60
Grade V	Under the North Star	1.70
Grade VI	My World and I	1.75

Figure 5.1 Prices for readers published in Circular 14, 1950-51, p.5

Each reader is presented as a part of the series with themed covers, titles and graphics, giving a uniform progression through Grades Four to Six. Generally the grade is not indicated on the cover and in some cases it is omitted entirely from the book. The *Canadian Reading Development* series *Teachers [sic] Manuals* make it clear that in smaller schools, Grades Four, Five and Six frequently worked as a unit, especially on enterprises and in Social Studies and Nature Studies.³⁹² Additionally, many school boards permitted teachers to use any of the approved books to suit the abilities of their pupils, and less able children might have been discouraged by reading a book below their apparent grade level. Schools were encouraged to provide a selection of approved readers for supplementary reading, in addition to the series chosen for use within the school.

The post-War readers are similar in appearance, printed on smooth high-quality paper (as evidenced by the lack of deterioration after half a century) and bound in signatures with hard cloth-covered boards. The books are of sturdy construction as they were expected to be used for many years. By the mid-1940s textbook design had become a carefully considered process: 'The occasion of receiving a new book is always an exciting one. In Grade Four it is still proper to make a little ceremony of it.'³⁹³ The editors of the *Canadian Parade Readers*

³⁹² Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away.*, pp.xiii-xxxvi.

³⁹³ Donald Dickie, ed. *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*, Canadian Parade Readers (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1947). p.52.

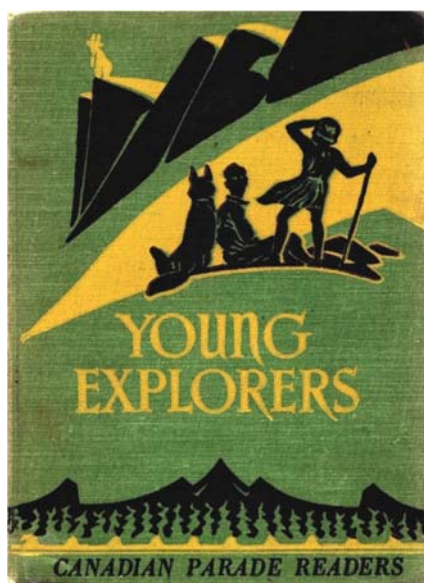


Fig. 5.2 *Young Explorers*

evidently put a great deal of thought into the appearance of their readers; every detail is considered and teachers are instructed on how they might incorporate the book design into their discussions.³⁹⁴ While the other post-World War II series all have themed graphic designs, none includes complex illustrated endpapers, or such detailed graphic design applied to the whole book. Other teachers' manuals do not incorporate such detailed instructions, although some talk about the excitement of beginning a new school year and the importance of treating schoolbooks with respect.

The instructions cited above imply that children take ownership of their new readers but in post-World War II Ontario public schools textbooks were normally issued to pupils for the school year, sometimes with a deposit against damage. As noted earlier, the 'Porter Plan' included free provision of readers to elementary school students; the stamps and labels pasted inside the covers made it very clear that the books were the property of the school board. In some cases readers were simply kept on a shelf and distributed for in-class use, denying any sense of individual ownership. When schoolbooks were replaced, they were either distributed to developing countries through charities or pulped. Only the parents of children at independent (private) fee-paying schools purchased the post-War readers, with the result that few copies remain today outside the archives.

While mid-twentieth-century hard-cover fiction and non-fiction for both children and adults was typically sold with coloured 'dust wrappers,' paper covers were not practical on schoolbooks. All the cloth covers are printed in bright colours, with either realistic or more abstract designs, mainly featuring different forms of transportation (Appendix 1, page 2.). The selections are organised thematically in units, as is illustrated in the Table of Contents provided in each book.³⁹⁵ (Scanned copies of the Tables of Contents are provided in Appendix III.)

³⁹⁴ Ibid. pp.52-53.

³⁹⁵ The sole exception is the *Young Canada Readers* series, where the selections appear to be organised by difficulty.

Like their earlier counterparts, the post-World War II readers are very different in appearance to the fiction enjoyed by children of the era. In the 1940s and 1950s, British and American mass market children's fiction such as the Enid Blyton books and Stratemeyer offerings were similar in appearance, generally under 200 pages, two to three centimeters thick, the British books being thicker than the American ones, weighing approximately 275 grams. In contrast, the Grade Four, Five and Six readers of the 1940s to 1960s are typically 400 to 500 pages long, approximately 3.5 centimeters thick and weigh a hefty 600 to 750 grams; some of the readers published in the early 1960s are even heavier. As the readers progress through the grades, the print decreases in size and there are generally fewer illustrations, thus the books for older children contain more information and the word count is higher.³⁹⁶

Like their pre-War counterparts, the American mass-market children's books were sparsely illustrated, relying upon bright dust-wrappers to attract readers, whereas the British series fiction continued to feature numerous pen-and-ink drawings. Puffin paperbacks (published by Penguin Books in Britain) became available in Canada in the 1950s and 60s and other children's paperbacks soon followed, leaving hardcover books as the purview of schools, libraries and occasional gift books. In comparison to these contemporary storybooks, the readers are far more lavishly illustrated than fiction intended for children over age eight, which generally did not rely as heavily on illustrations as books for younger children.

All the readers are illustrated with combinations of full-colour, two colour and pen-and-ink drawings. The pictures are universally designed to accompany the selections, with the exception of the four full-colour plates inserted into each of the *Canadian Parade Readers*. The teacher's guides for this series explain that these plates serve to illustrate the books' individual themes of Canadian exploration, adventure and achievement. The illustrations in the *New World Readers*, *Canadian Parade Readers* and *Highroads to Reading* series are 'cartoony' and rough in comparison to the subtler watercolour effects achieved in the *Canadian Reading Development* series. As these books were all produced between 1946 and 1947, the difference in quality cannot be blamed on the limitations of the lithographic presses of the day. Although the inclusion of grayscale photographs was technically feasible—and very common in geography texts of the 1950s—the readers use no photographs at all to illustrate the selections.

³⁹⁶ The exceptions are *Riding with the Sun* at 366 pages; *Across the Country*, 384 pages; *Golden Spurs*, 330 pages, all for Grade Four.

Most of the readers include a dictionary of unfamiliar words. All the readers include Acknowledgements, showing the source for the selections included in the reader, in miniscule type so small as to require a magnifying glass, which suggests that the original source of the material is not important. The Acknowledgments are frequently positioned before the Table of Contents and continued at the end of the book; they all include similar statements: 'Every reasonable care has been taken to trace ownership of copyright material. Information will be welcomed which will enable the publishers to correct any reference or credit in subsequent editions.'³⁹⁷

Teachers' Manuals

The teachers' guides or manuals produced to accompany the readers are an invaluable but hitherto untapped resource when studying constructions of Canadian national identity in school readers. I have not seen any references to teachers' manuals in articles on identity in schoolbooks in Canada. The manuals provide insight into the editors' intentions in the selection of the contents. They reflect the pedagogical methods of their times, and express specific aims in attempting to construct a Canadian identity through the readers.

The manuals clearly state the editors' purpose for the inclusion of each selection and provide extensive notes on how they intended each unit should be taught. Each item is considered both as part of a unit as well as individually and the relationships between the selections are made clear. The editors' philosophy of education is laid out in an introduction which reflects current pedagogy. Detailed instructions are provided, not only for teaching reading skills, but also in managing and evaluating group work within the classroom.

The manuals provide detailed lesson plans which teachers could choose to follow. The *Teacher's Guide to Over Land and Sea* makes it clear that, 'The Guide contains suggestions and not prescriptions. It is not expected that every teacher will follow the methods outlined but it is hoped that the teacher will make use of the suggestions when they seem to her to be helpful; and that she will vary the treatment of the selections to suit the needs and abilities of her own pupils.'³⁹⁸ While noting that its lesson plans are 'not hard and fast rules,' the *Teachers*

³⁹⁷ Stanley Watson, Lucy Bate, and Joyce Boyle, eds., *Over Land and Sea* (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1950). p.426.

³⁹⁸ Stanley Watson, ed. *Teacher's Guide to over Land and Sea*, Highroads to Reading (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1950). Introduction (unpaginated). Emphasis in original.

[sic] *Manual to Accompany Up and Away* reminds teachers that, ‘The procedures indicated are sound in method and have been prepared by experts in the teaching of reading... the lesson-plan arrangement has been so constructed that the teacher can follow it as outlined, step by step.’³⁹⁹ These prepared lesson plans would practically guarantee the success of the novice teacher, allowing her to gain confidence and experience without worrying overly about the preparation of appropriate materials.

The *Teacher’s Guide to Over Land and Sea* provides four pages of notes on teaching ‘How Sally Went to School,’ a story about a child avoiding her first day at a new school by roaming in the forest.⁴⁰⁰ This example is typical of the 1950s manuals, although possibly more detailed than some. ‘Background Notes’ reveals the author’s familiarity with the location; ‘Preparation for Reading’ suggests several ways of introducing the theme to the pupils; ‘New Words’ consists of a vocabulary list and definitions of unfamiliar terms such as ‘corduroy road,’ and ‘Reading and Discussion’ provides a list of questions to promote discussion and confirm the children’s reading comprehension. The *Guide* also suggests ‘Rereading the Story,’ strategies for ‘Developing Reading Skills,’ and a number of ‘Related Activities,’ including planning a ‘class excursion’ and writing an ‘imaginative composition.’ The unit concludes with ‘An Enterprise Based on “Young Canadians,”’ the purpose of which ‘would probably be to stimulate an interest in Canada as a whole, to assist the pupils to understand the life of problems of the people of the various parts of Canada, to establish a friendly attitude to the people of the different parts of our country, and to provide a useful body of information regarding it.’ The section ends with tips for evaluating both class and individual work on the ‘enterprise.’

The manuals had similar (or identical) covers to the readers they accompanied, but were clearly identified as a ‘manual’, ‘guide’ or ‘teacher’s edition’ in bold type. The manuals were also thinner, generally about two-thirds the thickness of the reader. Matching workbooks were provided by most publishers. These were usually the size of a thick notebook—the *Wide Open Windows* workbook has 160 pages—and children were required to fill in exercises in reading comprehension, spelling and grammar, either as homework or in the classroom.⁴⁰¹ The workbooks minimised tedious copying onto—and from—the blackboard and provided the teacher with tested and proven material to accompany the reading lessons. Unlike the readers

³⁹⁹ Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*. pp.xxi-xxii.

⁴⁰⁰ Watson, *Teacher’s Guide to over Land and Sea*.pp.3-6.

⁴⁰¹ The workbooks were typically ‘letter-size,’ 8-1/2 x11” and under 200 pages.

which were designed to be used for many years, the workbook was individual to the child and disposed of—or taken home proudly—at the end of the school year. Very few examples exist in The Ontario Textbook Collection.

Overall, the background information and suggested activities relate closely to the selections in the readers. However, it is difficult to make any link, however tenuous, between the suggested activities intended to accompany the two stories in the ‘Work and Play’ unit in *On the Beam*, the Grade Six reader in the *Highroads to Reading* series. This seems to be the only instance of a teachers’ manual deliberately promoting a philosophy outside of general desirable attitudes such as good citizenship, teamwork or kindness to animals, or fostering anything beyond the ‘healthy Canadianess’ mentioned earlier. In this case, the overtly stated conservation agenda in the *Guide* and suggested activities are not obviously related to the contents of the reader itself and is, therefore, worth examining. The first of the two selections in the unit, ‘At Charlie’s Place,’ is a simple story about neighbourliness to a new Canadian farmer. The story is set in the Holland Marsh area immediately north of Toronto, but could be located in any agricultural area in Canada.

The other story, ‘An Algonquin Adventure,’ is the tale of a young man who sets off to climb a fire tower. His arrogant confidence in his ‘skill as a woodsman’ leads to an ‘error in judgement,’ causing him to spend two nights alone in the forest.⁴⁰² The story concludes: ‘that is why I always carry a compass and a waterproof case of matches with me, wherever I go.’⁴⁰³ Both stories are focussed quite specifically on different aspects of growing up and taking responsibility, not ecology. Yet, although neither story makes any direct reference to soil erosion, the Teacher’s Guide contains over four pages of information on soil conservation and it is difficult to see any obvious links between the contents of these two stories and the suggested activity:

An enterprise based on the conservation and proper use of natural resources might readily grow out of this unit. The conservation of our resources of forest, soil, fish and wildlife, and water supply has become an important and pressing problem for Canadians, and the teacher should use suitable opportunities to enlist the interests of the pupils in the problem, and to develop a favourable attitude towards it.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰² Stanley Watson, Lucy Bate, and Joyce Boyle, eds., *On the Beam* (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1950)., p.85.

⁴⁰³ Ibid. p.98.

⁴⁰⁴ Stanley Watson, ed. *Teacher's Guide to on the Beam*, Highroads to Reading (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1950)., p.27.

The other activities and background notes within this Guide seem to be closely related to the selections in *On the Beam*, although the tone occasionally verges on a sarcasm most uncharacteristic of the manuals I have seen in my research, as evidenced by: ‘The fact that in representing himself as a half-breed, Grey Owl was perpetrating a hoax which was later exposed, has little importance to the significance of the story.’⁴⁰⁵ This somewhat sarcastic tone and the overt promotion of a conservation agenda are uncharacteristic but the *Highroads to Reading* series was approved for use in Ontario from 1950 to 1967 so presumably these anomalies were not considered significant within the educational norms of the time. As these readers and the accompanying manuals were prepared by educators, tested extensively in classrooms and selected by individual teachers or school board curriculum committees made up of teachers, the manuals presumably met the needs of teachers of the day.

*Constructing Canadian Identity – ‘Fix this fact in their minds.’*⁴⁰⁶

The 1950s readers could be considered children’s handbooks on Canadian citizenship. The teachers’ manual for *Young Explorers* starts with the basics: ‘Many Grade Four children do not know the name of our country. Fix this fact in their minds.’⁴⁰⁷

The long-term influence of the 1950s readers in constructing Canadian national identity cannot be underestimated. The *Highroads to Reading* series was authorised in Ontario until 1967, while the *Canadian Reading Development* series and the *New World Readers* (revised 1958) remained in use until 1974. These three series can be considered the principal series used in Ontario through the 1950s; the *Canadian Parade* series (approved in Ontario from 1950-1958) seems to have been more widely used in the western provinces, where series editor Donald Dickie was a highly influential figure in education. Stanley Watson, series editor for the *Highroads to Reading* series was one of the authors of Ontario’s 1937 *Programme of Studies* (the ‘Little Grey Book’), therefore that series can be considered particularly representative of the *Programme’s* intentions.

As Amy von Heyking observes, textbooks are ‘the reflection of dominant values of privileged groups who author them: teachers and university professors, educational bureaucrats. In this sense, curriculum, textbooks and other teaching resources are expressions

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid. p.61.

⁴⁰⁶ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.53.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.p.53.

of “official” ideologies regarding identity, community and citizenship.⁴⁰⁸ The editors of the *Canadian Parade* series are particularly forthright in their views on Canadian identity: ‘Now that Canada is to take her place in a world society of nations, and must take that place as a nation or not at all, it is essential that Canadians should be trained to feel and think as a nation, to know what they stand for as a nation.’⁴⁰⁹ Similar statements appear throughout the teachers’ manuals for this series; the other reading series are somewhat more tempered in their approaches. The *Canadian Reading Development* series seems particularly influenced by the writings of Governor General Vincent Massey; his *On Being Canadian* is referenced in the manual for *All Sails Set*.⁴¹⁰

The teachers’ manuals for all four series contain strong statements of the editors’ intentions of creating Canadian national identity through their readers:

The book as a whole must be Canadian in outlook. Great pains have been taken to inform the pupil of Canadian culture and Canadian achievement to the end that he may develop an admiration of, and affection for, Canada as his homeland.... The aim has been to foster a healthy vigorous intelligent Canadianism, unmarred by racial or religious prejudice; strong loyal family relationships; tolerant and informed world-mindedness; with reverence, integrity, industry and benevolence.⁴¹¹

The editors aim to remedy the lack of explicit contemporary Canadian content leading to a lack of a cohesive Canadian national identity in earlier readers: ‘It is commonly felt that, in the past, Canadian teachers have, perhaps, erred on the side of too little emphasis on patriotism, too little teaching of Canada.’⁴¹²

The readers authorised in Ontario in 1909 and in 1937 lacked a cohesive sense of Canadian identity primarily because they included very little contemporary Canadian material. As observed in Chapters Three and Four, most stories with specifically Canadian themes and locations were set in the past, often the distant past of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This was due in large part to the lack of indigenous Canadian material, the lack of distinctly

⁴⁰⁸ von Heyking, *Creating Citizens - History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980*.p.5.

⁴⁰⁹ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.51.

⁴¹⁰ Fred C. Biehl, F.L. Barrett, and True Davidson, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany All Sails Set*, ed. J. Ranton McIntosh, Canadian Reading Development Series (Toronto: Copp Clark Co. Limited, 1949).p.5.

⁴¹¹ Franklin L. Barrett, ed. *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*ibid. (1948).p.xv.

⁴¹² Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.51.

Canadian children's literature.⁴¹³ The editors of the new reading series remedied this deficiency by commissioning new works especially for the readers:

The Reader contains twenty-six prose selections. Eleven of these are Canadian stories written by Canadians about Canada and Canadian children, so the flavour and point of view of the book are definitely Canadian. Eight of them were written especially for *On the Beam* and have not appeared anywhere before.⁴¹⁴

The manuals also stress the authors' qualifications and experience: 'The writer of this story, Helene Rothwell, is a teacher in the Forest Hills Schools, Toronto. She grew up on the prairies and knows what it is like to be a child on a prairie farm.'⁴¹⁵ Teachers would likely be familiar with the names of the Canadian journalist contributors, including Bruce Hutchinson, Max Braithwaite, and Don Henshaw. Some selections were written by the series editors: *Highroads to Reading* editor Joyce Boyle, contributed three stories to that series, *New Worlds* editor G.H. Dobrindt produced two plays for *My World and I*, and Donald Dickie wrote two prose selections for the *Canadian Parade* series, all selections with distinctively Canadian themes and locations.

While the *Canadian Parade* and *Canadian Reading Development* series are clearly identified as Canadian textbooks, none of the readers include 'Canada' in their titles and, with the exception of the *Canadian Parade* series, none of the book covers are explicitly Canadian; most have a transportation theme. All readers include units on Canada, with titles suggesting the landscape or its inhabitants: 'Young Citizens of Canada' 'Young Canadians' 'Young Canadians Today', 'Young Canada' 'Canadians All', 'From Sea to Sea' 'Lake and River, Mountain and Plain', 'The Land We Love', 'At Home in Canada', 'Canada is Our Country', 'The Canadian Way', 'Canadian Pageant'.

Each reader in the *Canadian Parade Series* includes an introductory statement on Canada and the theme of the reader. The other series include similar statements in the teachers' manuals, likely with the intention that the sentiments will be conveyed to the children. Each series includes at least one patriotic poem, the most popular being Jean Blewett's 'There's a Thing We Love', which also appears twice as 'The Native Born'. Others include 'O Canada', 'This Canada of Ours' and 'The land We Love' for which music is provided. These selections are very similar in content, with Canada constructed as 'free', 'great' and 'north'.

⁴¹³ Edwards and Saltman, Egoff

⁴¹⁴ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to on the Beam*.p.v.

⁴¹⁵ *Teacher's Guide to over Land and Sea*.p.7.

Through the use of symbols and legends, descriptions of the landscape and its inhabitants, the readers of the 1950s construct Canadian national identity for schoolchildren, and model the desired qualities of Canadian citizens. The next three sections, Symbols, Landscape and Inhabitants explore the contents of the readers, revealing how Canadian is represented through both illustrations and text.

Symbols and myths

‘God Save the King’ [Queen] is entirely absent from the 1950s readers, which generally positions ‘O Canada!’ as the country’s national anthem by default. This positioning in official schoolbooks must be considered, at least in part, responsible for the recognition of the song as the national anthem in 1980. Children are encouraged to think of others across the country joining in singing, precisely analogous to Anderson’s example of national identity created through an imagined community. And yet, unlike Anderson’s singers, these children singing ‘O Canada!’ are not anonymous but ‘children just like you’ whom we meet in the stories.

The Union Jack, although Canada’s official flag until 1964, does not appear except in units on the Commonwealth in the *Canadian Reading Development* series, or in historic contexts – planting the flag in the new land as a symbol of British imperialism.⁴¹⁶ In the ‘Parliament Buildings’ frontispiece to *Riding with the Sun* it is just possible to discern that the flag flying from the Peace Tower is the Union Jack and the Red Ensign can be identified in a single illustration, flying from the flagpole in ‘They Helped Themselves’.⁴¹⁷ The lack of emblems, both the coat-of-arms and the Red Ensign may be, at least in part, because both are complicated designs, almost impossible for children to draw. In the post-war years, the Union Jack, while still officially the flag of Canada was likely more commonly associated with the British Empire or Commonwealth.

Other symbols, including the beaver as emblem and the national coat-of-arms are mentioned but not in a sustained or consistent manner. When teaching the story ‘Flat Tail’, the teachers’ manual suggests: ‘Draw attention to the beaver being one of our national emblems

⁴¹⁶ Clare B. Routley, ed. *Under the North Star*, The New World Readers (Toronto: Macmillan: Ryerson, 1946). Title page illustration.

⁴¹⁷ Fred C. Biehl, ed. *All Sails Set* (Toronto: Copp Clark Co, 1948).p.8.

and discuss reasons for suitability of same.⁴¹⁸ Similarly, children studying ‘A Grand Adventure’ might ‘Write a short paragraph explaining why they think the beaver is a good symbol of Canada.’⁴¹⁹ The Mountie is introduced as a symbol of law-and-order in the *Canadian Parade* series, bringing peace to the west and guarding national parks, and used, at least pictorially, to represent Canada’s peacekeeping role, in the title page for ‘Children and Fairs in Other Lands’ (Figure 5.3).⁴²⁰

British imperial ethnicity is reinforced, not only through numerous stories of pioneer ancestors but also through the frequent use of traditional British myths and legends, such as Robin Hood and King Arthur. The teacher’s manual for *Wide Open Windows* explains: ‘Famous stories of English literature should be part of the education of every child. They are an imperishable part of our cultural heritage, and the schools have a responsibility to perpetuate

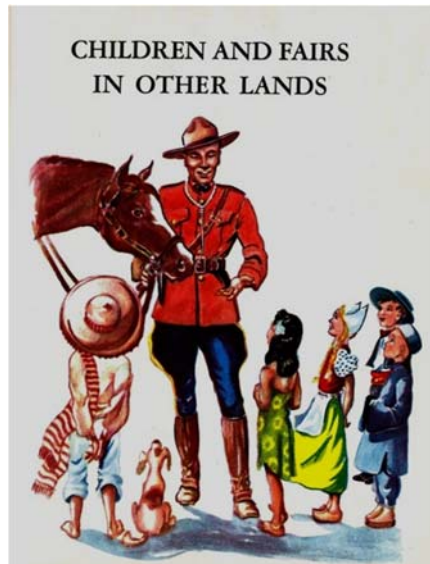


Fig. 5.3 ‘Children and Fairs in Other Lands’, *Up and Away*, p.187.

this heritage. Moreover, to many children in the past, the school reading text has been the only source of these stories.’⁴²¹ While traditional European folktales are included, such as Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Anderson, the staples of the earlier readers—tales of ancient Greece and Rome and Aesop’s Fables—have all but disappeared. Most readers include selections from *The Bible*, typically ‘Now Let Us Praise Famous Men’, reflecting the Protestant Christian ethos of Ontario public education—Separate (Roman Catholic) Schools used different sets of readers. While a handful of Aboriginal legends are included, these are not incorporated into Canadian identity, but remain Other.

While Empire Day has all but vanished, Canadian ties to Britain are maintained through references to the Commonwealth, especially in the *Canadian Reading Development*

⁴¹⁸ Stanley Watson, ed. *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*, Highroads to Reading (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1947).p.187.

⁴¹⁹ Miriam Norton and Eleanor Boyce, eds., *Teacher's Handbook for under the North Star*, The New World Readers (Toronto: Ryerson Press and Macmillans in Canada, 1950).p.102.

⁴²⁰ Paul McKee, ed. *Up and Away* (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Co. Limited, 1947).p.117.

⁴²¹ Barrett, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*.p.169.

series which includes a Commonwealth unit in each of its three readers: 'Children of the Empire', 'Under the Union Jack' and 'The Sun Never Sets'. These feature stories of Canadian children visiting relatives in Commonwealth countries.

Landscape

The four reading series assume that Grade Four pupils have previously acquired a concept of 'country' through the study of stories of children in other lands. *If I Were Going*, a Grade Three reader, is based entirely on travels to other lands, supporting the curriculum goals outlined in the *Programme of Studies*; children move from studying home and immediate neighbourhood to family life 'in other lands.'⁴²² The *Programme* suggests that globe and maps be used, at least informally, from Grade Three. Thus children should arrive in Grade Four with some understanding of geography, and an understanding that there is a world beyond their immediate neighbourhood and outside their personal experience.

American geographer Yi-Fu-Tuan discusses children's understandings of remote places in *Space and Place*:

'At age five or six a child is capable of curiosity about the geography of remote places. How can he appreciate exotic locales of which he has no direct experience? Learning theory has yet to explain satisfactorily these apparent leaps in comprehension. It is not surprising, however, that a child can enjoy news of distant places, for he leads a rich life of fantasy and is at home in fantasyland before adults require him to dwell imaginatively in the real countries of a geography book. To an intelligent and lively child, experience is active searching and occasional wild extrapolations beyond the given: he is not bound by what he sees and feels in his home and local neighbourhood.'⁴²³

The manual for *Young Explorers* discusses the role of fantasy in children's constructions of their world, and *Over the Bridge* begins with stories of fantasy, moving to studies of Canada only in the final unit, whereas the other readers open with a unit on Canada.⁴²⁴

Teachers are instructed that, 'The map of the Dominion of Canada should be used in connection with the study of each selection.'⁴²⁵ Within the 1950s readers, far more than their predecessors, stories take place in specific locations and this naming of places both imparts

⁴²² Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937." pp.66-69.

⁴²³ Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. p.31.

⁴²⁴ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*. p.vi.

⁴²⁵ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*. p.1.

familiarity and implies possession, as well as adding verisimilitude—a sense that the stories ‘really happened.’ The readers also attempt to make ‘Canada’ ‘real’ by introducing pupils to children ‘just like you’ in other parts of the country, in real-life situations, as will be discussed under *Inhabitants*, below. The Canadian landscape presented in the readers would be considered to be a true representation of Canada; the books have the authority of school texts, although many of the stories they contain are fiction.

By describing the physical land that constitutes Canada, and imbuing the landscape with cultural values, the readers construct Canada not only as a country but also as a nation. As will be shown, the Canada constructed by readers is more topographical than political. The first thing a child learns about Canada is that it is ‘big’ and stretches ‘from sea to sea’. While the expression, ‘from sea to sea’ is frequently used in descriptions of Canada in the readers and is the unit title for the Canadian section in *Over the Bridge*, neither the readers nor the teachers’ manuals explain that this phrase is Canada's motto, ‘A Mari usque ad Mare’ - ‘From sea to sea’.⁴²⁶ The country is defined geographically in the units on Canada as ‘sea-to-sea’, with the Arctic generally covered in separate units. The United States border is barely mentioned, except in a few references to the RCMP in the early days of Western Canada and Canada's role in constructing the Alaska Highway.

In addition to Canada being constructed from a topographical rather than political perspective, this construction is ‘Laurentian’ (or ‘nationalist’) rather than ‘Continentalist’ following the two main contrasting theoretical constructions of Canada. Historian Jack Bumsted places the responsibility for this divide on Canadian social scientists of the interwar period. The continentalists essentially see Canada as part of North America, with trade and political relationships working on a north-south axis, whereas the Laurentian group see the axis as working from east to west, basing their theory on the works of economist Harold Innis. Historians, including Donald Creighton and W.L. Morton, and geographer Cole Harris have elaborated on this theory. According to Bumsted:

Harold Innis discovered and explained that the Canadian early economy was a northern one based on resources traded overseas using the country's natural waterways, which ran in an east-west direction. From the beginning, geography had given Canada coherence; by implication, the creation of a political nation did not impose artificial boundaries on the geography but merely continued the traditional ones.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁶ Canadian Heritage and Patrimoine canadien, "First 'Canadian Flags'," <http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/cpsc-ccsp/sc-cs/df5-eng.cfm>.

⁴²⁷ Bumsted, "Visions of Canada: A Brief History of Writing on the Canadian Character and the Canadian Identity." p.25.

The readers of the 1950s universally subscribe to the Laurentian school, with the significance of the St Lawrence River continually enforced throughout the readers, not only in historic accounts of early explorers and the fur trade but also adventure stories including ‘Shooting the Rapids’ (*Over Land and Sea*); geographic expositions such as the classic Paddle-to-the-Sea (*Riding with the Sun*) and Johnny-the-Fish (*Under the North Star*); or reminders such as ‘The River St Lawrence’:

O Canada, my song is thine,
And long as Time shall be,
My waters murmuring thy name
Shall flow into the sea.⁴²⁸

‘Canadian Pageant’, the final unit in *Proud Procession* includes three ‘TransCanada’ selections on travel and communication across the country, from the fur trade routes, to the railway to air routes. These all enforce the Laurentian construction of Canada. Overall,



Fig. 5.4 ‘From Sea to Sea’, *Over the Bridge*, p.349

throughout the readers Canada's political, economic and cultural ties are with Europe, primarily Britain, rather than the United States, which is simply a ‘good neighbour’. Canada's internal boundaries are also constructed as physical rather than political; while provincial boundaries are indicated graphically on maps (Figure 5.4), they are seldom referenced within the text.

The teachers’ guide for *Under the North Star* states that: ‘The children should study the map of Canada. They should know the different sections of Canada—the Maritimes, the Great Lakes, St Lawrence region, the Prairies, and the West Coast. They should know the

⁴²⁸ Margaret A. Robinson and Maud Blanchard Tomey, eds., *Over the Bridge*, The New World Readers (Toronto: Ryerson:Macmillan, 1946).p.369.

provinces as they are located in the various sections.’⁴²⁹ In practice, while the individual provinces are named, it is the topography, not the boundaries that are significant, leading to a regional view of Canada.

In the map in Figure 5.4 the island of Newfoundland is barely indicated, a reminder that Newfoundland did not join Confederation until 1949, three years after the publication of *Over the Bridge*, and therefore not visually represented as part of Canada; *Over the Bridge* was not revised until 1958. Although after 1949 Newfoundland is referred to as the ‘tenth province’ in geography and history books and new maps would appear on the classroom walls, the *Highroads to Reading* and *Canadian Reading Development* series remained unchanged until discontinued in 1967 and 1973 respectively.

The physical size of the country is emphasised, especially in the patriotic poems, Canada is ‘big’ or ‘great’. The few visual representations of the whole country suggest an empty land as shown in Figure 5.5 ‘Canada’ - ‘Two thousand miles of forest’.

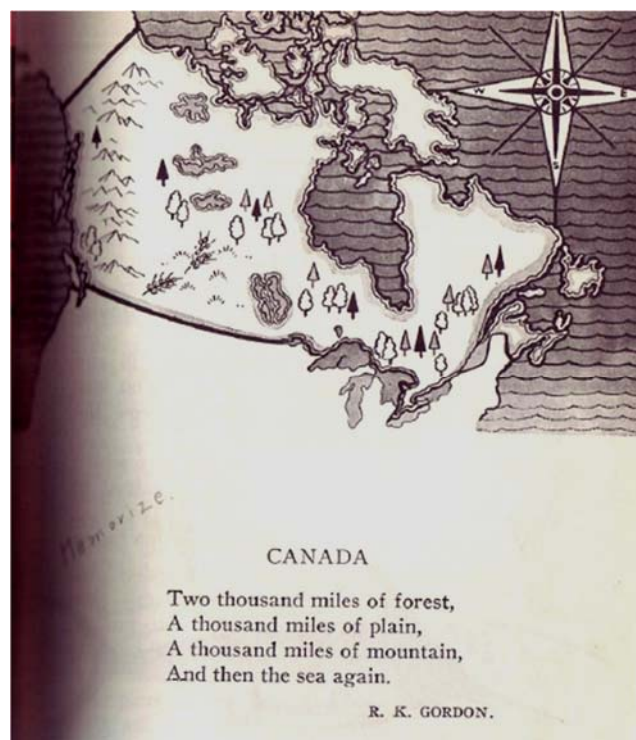


Fig. 5.5 ‘Canada’, *Young Explorers*, p.3

In order to acquaint children with their country, each series of readers creates an imaginary trip across Canada, a series of selections that take the children invariably from east to west, visiting ‘friends’ in the different regions. The teacher’s manual for *Riding with the Sun* explains: ‘The division of the readers entitled Lake and River, Mountain and Plain is intended to interest the pupil in his own country. The map of the Dominion of Canada should be used in connection with the study of each selection. While the selections

⁴²⁹ Miriam Norton and Eleanor Boyce, eds., *Teacher's Handbook for under the North Star* (Ryerson Press and Macmillans in Canada, 1950).p.131.

themselves by no means give a complete picture of Canada from coast to coast, the unit does direct the attention of the pupils to the activities of children in various parts of our country from the Atlantic to the Pacific.⁴³⁰ The unit title is taken from the poem, 'My Country':

O Canada, my country,
That spreads from sea to sea,
Thy mountains, rivers, lakes and plains
Are very dear to me.⁴³¹

The teachers' manual for *Young Explorers* suggests that: 'Chapter One... has been arranged to assist the teacher in giving Grade Four pupils a bird's eye view of our country... the teacher may use the selections as readings in connection with a project or enterprise dealing with a TransCanada flight.'⁴³² Similarly, the stated purpose of the story 'Riding with the Sun' is 'to give the child the vicarious experience of flying across his own Dominion of Canada.'⁴³³ The editors of *Under the North Star* go a step further when introducing 'The Land We Love': 'The aim of this unit is to increase children's knowledge, *experience* and appreciation of their own country.'⁴³⁴ These virtual cross-Canada serve to create not only an imagined community through visits to children 'just like you' but also an imagined Canadian landscape.

The teachers' manuals acknowledge that the places to be visited may be outside the experience of an eight-to-twelve year-old, for example: 'A discussion of the title *Shooting the Rapids* should clarify the meaning of the term for any children who are unfamiliar with swiftly running rivers.'⁴³⁵ The teacher's manual introduces 'Good Morning Manitoba':

To prairie children, the scene is familiar, but those who live in wooded, foothill, mountain, or coast country need pictures and lively description to build up a mental picture of the great golden plain; its vast spaces and distant ever-moving horizon; its delicate and ever-changing shot-silk colours; its immense airiness and sunniness. Study the picture opposite page 62 to bring out these points.⁴³⁶

Many illustrations are not particularly helpful as the landscape is not overly detailed, serving mainly as a background for the activities of the characters. The manuals suggest teachers compile a portfolio of illustrations from magazines, calendars, etc.—or rely on personal experience: 'The mountains are even more difficult than the prairies to picture in

⁴³⁰ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*.p1.

⁴³¹ Stanley Watson, Lucy Bate, and Dorothy Ryan, eds., *Riding with the Sun* (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1946).p.46.

⁴³² Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.51.

⁴³³ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*.p.195.

⁴³⁴ Norton and Boyce, *Teacher's Handbook for under the North Star*.p.131. Italics mine.

⁴³⁵ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to over Land and Sea*.p.15. Italics in original.

⁴³⁶ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.61.

imagination... Fortunately good pictures are easily obtained and many teachers will have seen the mountains.⁴³⁷

In *Picturing Canada*, Edwards and Saltman write: 'Many children's literature specialists emphasize the role of identifiable regional representation in shaping children's awareness of their own location as Canadians... In contrast, critic Michele Landsberg points out that Canadian picturebooks reflect myths of childhood and the regional Canadian landscape rather than the realities.⁴³⁸ While some of the 'cross-Canada' tours pay brief visits to cities—for example, 'Riding with the Sun' begins in Winnipeg and ends in Victoria—remarkably few stories are set in cities, despite the 1951 Canadian census report that 71 percent of the population lived in urban settings.⁴³⁹ While a few of the patriotic poems are illustrated, at least in part, with city scenes, these locations are not referenced within the prose selections and overall, the city is constructed as unhealthy, a place to leave for the pure air of the country. 'Building a Skyscraper' appears throughout the readers as one of the only urban selections, with the teachers' manuals disagreeing about its presentation. The *Canadian Parade* series editors write:

Few Canadian children will have a mental picture of a skyscraper. If possible, the teacher should have other pictures (post cards will do) of one to supplement that in the text. The poem might be introduced by discussing the picture, its height measured by its many stories [sic] of windows, its use, why it is only found in big cities, what it is made of, what machines might be used in the building.⁴⁴⁰

In contrast, the *Under the North Star* manual states: 'Here is a selection, easily understood by any city child and not difficult to explain to rural children. It challenges the imagination of anyone who stops to consider how marvellous are the undertakings man is able to carry out with the help of scientific knowledge.'⁴⁴¹

In contrast to the unhealthy and unattractive city, the countryside is consistently described as 'beautiful' and natural beauty is one of the defining characteristics of Canadian landscape promoted within the readers. Introducing 'The Land We Love' unit, the teachers' guide for *Under the North Star* states: 'They should know something of the natural beauties

⁴³⁷ Ibid.p.69

⁴³⁸ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.pp.194-95.

⁴³⁹ Canada, "Population Urban and Rural, by Province and Territory (Ontario)."

⁴⁴⁰ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.213.

⁴⁴¹ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to over Land and Sea*.p.114.

of the different parts of Canada.⁴⁴² The guide for *Young Explorers* suggests a more imagined landscape: 'In discussion the teacher might help the children to build up *in imagination* a definite picture of a Canadian country scene. Begin with their own neighbourhood, and extend the picture beyond that to include mountains, rivers,--whatever is necessary to complete the scene. This picture should clarify and emphasize the ideas that Canada is beautiful, and a good country in which to live.'⁴⁴³ 'Beauty' is generally not man-made, although wheat fields and orchards are considered among Canada's natural beauties; the outdoors seems to be a defining factor. The editors of *Proud Procession* arranged their selections 'to suggest a background of the Canadian scene, the clean outdoor world of sea and sun, woods and rivers, that form our national home, the physical as well as the spiritual climate in which the Canadian personality is being moulded.'⁴⁴⁴

The natural wilderness landscape is transformed by resource extraction (logging, mining) from 'beautiful' to 'exciting', as in 'The Young Fire Warden': 'Here is a thrilling story of the "lumber country" of British Columbia, in which a Canadian brother and his sister play an important part in saving a stand of valuable timber from fire.'⁴⁴⁵ The readers reveal the value of hidden mineral resources of the Canadian wilderness. In 'Across the Ribbon of Steel,' even the monotonous Northern Ontario landscape conceals wealth:

All that day and night they travelled through a lonely wild country of rocks and forest and streams... "This Northern Ontario is mining country," said the friendly waiter at breakfast. "Deep down in the earth here, is copper and nickel and gold. Gold for rings, and copper for kettles, and nickel for skates." They had just left the town of Sudbury.⁴⁴⁶

'Across the Ribbon of Steel' provides 'an inspiring story of how the first great railway was built against impossible odds. The story... gives a view of Canada from Halifax to the Pacific... into which is woven a record of great achievement.'⁴⁴⁷ The dangers of constructing the railway through the Canadian wilderness are emphasised:

He built dynamite factories here in the wilderness and dynamited the rock. With the crushed rock, the workmen filled in the almost bottomless swamps, and on the rocks the built the track. Mr. Van Horne and his men fought the

⁴⁴² Norton and Boyce, *Teacher's Handbook for under the North Star*.p.131.

⁴⁴³ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.53. Italics mine

⁴⁴⁴ *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Proud Procession*. p.60.

⁴⁴⁵ G.H. Dobrindt and Martha Brand, eds., *Teacher's Handbook for My World and I*, The New World Readers (Toronto: Ryerson Press & Macmillans in Canada, 1950).pp.24-25.

⁴⁴⁶ McKee, *Up and Away*. p.341.

⁴⁴⁷ Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*., p.199.

endless swamps, the mosquitoes, and the biting cold. Millions of dollars were spent and many a life was lost.⁴⁴⁸

Perhaps the conditions of railway construction and consequent loss of life were considered too dismal even for Grade Six students, as there are very few descriptions of the building of railways. The relative paucity of railway stories is surprising, given both children's fascination with trains and the importance of the TransCanada railway in the formation of Canada. In contrast, there are several selections on road building. 'Count Me In' is a breathless account of the construction of the Alaska Highway from the perspective of a digger; the Grade Four readers have many examples of the personification of machines.

Both Canada and the United States were in danger. Supplies must be taken northward at once and there was no road into Alaska. Could a road be built? There would be mountains to bypass, forests to cut down, rivers and streams to span. Mile after mile of muskeg would have to be filled in. Could it be done?⁴⁴⁹

In common with other 'modern' tales, these construction stories have a great sense of urgency, men and machines battling against the relentless weather—or the rugged topography of the Canadian wilderness.

Despite the 'sea to sea' construction of Canada within the readers, the dominant setting for both resource extraction and adventure stories is the Canadian Shield country of the Group

of Seven, the geographical area considered to impart the 'Northern' character to Canadian national identity and the location of much of the exploration, fur trade and early settlement of the country (Figure 5.6). This particular landscape is believed by art historian Linda Jessup, among others, to represent British imperial ethnicity: 'the colony-to-nation narrative championed by the Group [of Seven] and its

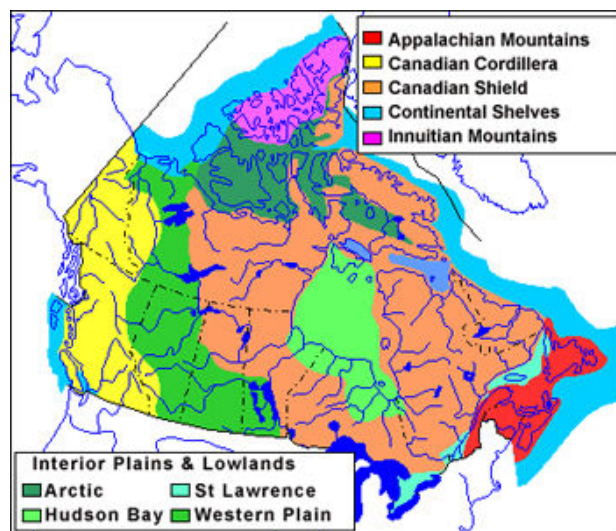


Fig. 5.6 Geographical regions of Canada, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*

⁴⁴⁸ McKee, *Up and Away*. p.343.

⁴⁴⁹ Donald Dickie, ed. *Young Explorers*, Canadian Parade Readers (Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1947). p.285.

supporters reveals their essentially British Canadianism, which in its appearance of inclusiveness—its claim to speak for the country as a whole—is characteristic of what can be more precisely defined as Ontario regionalism.⁴⁵⁰ The readers extend this official sense of British ethnicity and, in their role as officially sanctioned textbooks, could be considered a part of the process of institutionalizing this ‘Ontario regionalism’ and ‘British Canadianism.’

The 1950s readers can also be considered, at least in part, responsible for establishing the work of the Group of Seven as ‘national’ art, the ‘correct’ way to depict Canada, in the minds of schoolchildren—and their teachers. *Proud Procession* includes the radio play, ‘Seven Who Painted Canada’. A radio play may seem an odd medium to examine visual art, but children were accustomed to radio plays in the classroom and this selection is an adaptation of a C.B.C. radio drama. As the play emphasises the artists’ teamwork rather than their artistry, the choice of medium is perhaps less important: ‘the story of Canadian art is the story of friendship, the loyalty of men to each other and to a bright vision of Canada. They came back from the war, back to the peace and glory of the wilderness.’⁴⁵¹ While this is the only 1950s reader for Grades Four to Six to include a selection on the Group of Seven, the *Canadian Reading Development* Grades Seven text includes colour plates of their artwork and from the 1930s most school children received daily exposure to Canadian landscape art, primarily the works of the Group of Seven, made possible by the distribution programmes of the National Gallery of Canada.

Art historian Joyce Zemans explains that, building on the success of earlier programs, the National Gallery ‘focused on Canadian art and targeted the school population as its principal market,’ creating reproductions ‘which decorated classrooms and were integrated into curricula between 1929 and circa 1950 ... almost exclusively central Canadian and landscape-based.’ The programme successfully targeted Canadian schools as its ‘principal market,’ as evidenced by frequent suggestions in teachers’ manuals that specific Canadian paintings should be used to illustrate lessons. It is likely that even poor and remote schools were able to benefit from the reproduction programmes which, according to Zemans, required only ‘a receptive ministry of education, school board, individual teacher or committed citizens to provide classrooms and individual students across the country with their own “collections” of Canadian art.’⁴⁵² Artist and educator Patti Vera Pente, exploring the influence of landscape

⁴⁵⁰ Jessup, “Bushwackers in the Gallery: Antimodernism and the Group of Seven.” p.136.

⁴⁵¹ Dickie, *Proud Procession*. pp.347-355

⁴⁵² Zemans, “Establishing the Canon: Nationhood, Identity, and the National Gallery's First Reproduction Programme of Canadian Art.” p.183-84.

images in Canadian education, 'where the construction of nationalism through landscape and wilderness is persistent,' believes that these programmes 'cemented' the relationship between the images of the Group of Seven and education.⁴⁵³ The teacher's manual suggests using reproductions of the paintings to enforce the lesson: 'If any other works of this Group of Seven can be obtained more examples may be shown and the pupils asked to tell how the artist makes them feel. How do they know that it is Canada that is pictured?'⁴⁵⁴ Pente considers that, 'Canadians' repeated exposure to wilderness landscape images and the constructed associations about Canada that are taught in conjunction with such images shape collective identity.'⁴⁵⁵

The play itself repudiates the traditions of representational art: 'We've imitated Europe long enough. What we need is courage to be ourselves. To paint this country as it really is, bold colour, clean sunlight.'⁴⁵⁶ Ironically, the play concludes with reviews from the English newspapers: "Their bold landscapes give the very look and feel of Canada... they are young artists painting a young country superbly."⁴⁵⁷ It was not until the artists received praise in Britain that they were accepted within their own country. It is also ironic that virtually all the illustrations within the 1950s readers are traditional representational art and only three depict uninhabited landscapes.

The wilderness setting, especially the Canadian Shield country, imparts a distinctly Canadian identity to the selections within the readers. The stories set in small towns, family farms or even seaside could be set in the United States, or, in many cases, Australia or Britain. These stories emphasise family values, fair play and the virtues of hard work, qualities desirable in Canadians, but not unique. In contrast, the stories set in the wilderness reflect the main metanarratives of Canadian national identity, constructing Canada as a Northern nation. These include tales of the inhospitable landscape cleared and transformed into a home by the brave British settler ancestors; survival—not only historic tales of explorers and voyageurs but also present-day stories of children lost—and found—in the bush; and the North as the future of Canada through exciting stories of resource extraction.

⁴⁵³ Patti Vera Pente, "The Hidden Curriculum of Wilderness: Images of Landscape in Canada," *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies* 7, no. 1 (2009).pp.112.

⁴⁵⁴ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Proud Procession*.p.288.

⁴⁵⁵ Pente, "The Hidden Curriculum of Wilderness: Images of Landscape in Canada."p.118.

⁴⁵⁶ Dickie, *Proud Procession*.p.350.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.p.355.

Edwards and Saltman believe that:

As in other genres of Canadian children's literature, the rural roots of Canadian society and the imaginative pull of the northern wilderness in Canadian culture have played a role in shaping image and text in Canadian illustrated books for children... Romantic ideas about the unspoiled and the innocent nature of childhood, and a persistent strain of agrarian idealism in Canadian political discourse, have intertwined with the idea of wilderness as pastoral, unspoiled, and natural, locating a particularly idealized image of Canadian childhood within an environment from which urban settlement has been erased.⁴⁵⁸

Throughout the readers, the Canadian wilderness landscape is positioned as a space that people travel through, as explorers or tourists, or stay and transform, either as settlers or through resource extraction, thus imparting two distinct sets of values. The untouched Canadian wilderness of the Canadian Shield is constructed as the preferred location for stories of adventure. This could be interpreted simply as romantic escapism—if it were not for the fact the transformed rural agricultural landscape is equally privileged over the city. Both are valued as 'healthy' while the city is noisy and dirty. Even the wilderness transformed by resource extraction is positioned as having far greater value than the urban manufacturing it supports. This consistent repudiation of urban modernity and promotion of the preferred antimodern rural or wilderness locations and associated activities create considerable unresolved tensions within the constructions of the Canadian landscape as a component of national identity within the readers.

The role of youth and the resources of the northern landscape in the future of Canada is summarised in the teacher's notes on the poem, 'The Height of Land': 'It made him [the poet] think, these lovely lonely lands, of the two parts of Canada: on the one hand, the crowded southern part; on the other, the lonely north, many times larger than the south, beautiful and rich, but empty still, waiting for men and women to come and use it. To do that may be the work of boys and girls now in Grade Six.'⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁸ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.p.193.

⁴⁵⁹ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Proud Procession*. p.346.

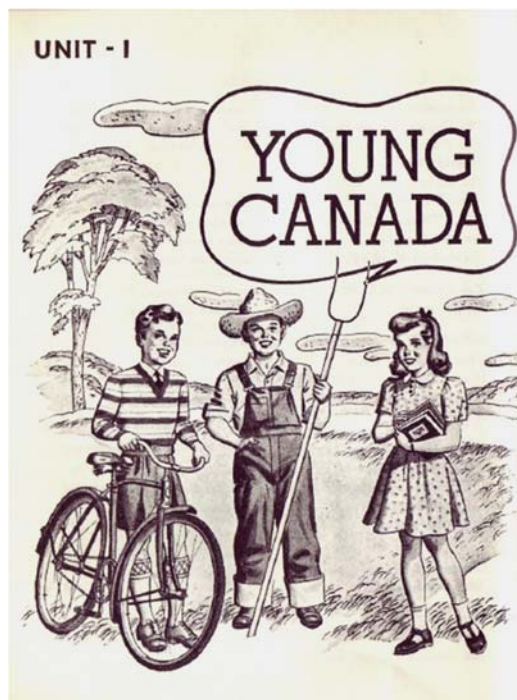


Fig. 5.7 'Young Canada' On the Beam, p.8

Inhabitants – 'Young Canadians'

The Canadian landscape constructed in the readers is inhabited by humans—European and Aboriginal—and animals. All but two of the twelve books of this era open with units on Canada, with titles such as 'Young Canadians,' illustrated with 'typical' young Canadians at work and play. 'To children, the picture of life in other parts of Canada becomes less remote if the stories deal in a matter-of-fact way with the activities of children like themselves.'⁴⁶⁰ As discussed in the Landscape section above, many of the readers take pupils on an imaginary journey across Canada, meeting other children along the way. This is precisely similar to Weber's

example of *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants* cited in the introduction as a key tool in constructing national identity in the classroom.

The Canadian national identity constructed in the 1950s readers is founded *not* on the anonymity described by Anderson in his imagined community of newspaper readers, but on an imagined familiarity. Children are introduced to 'typical' young Canadians by full name – not just David or Sally, but 'David McAllister,' and 'Sally Ferris'. They also meet David and Sally's families, friends and pets, and are told precisely where they live, reinforced through colourful pictures of their homes and surroundings; teachers are told to 'Make good use of the illustrations.'⁴⁶¹

Children are actively encouraged to identify with their counterparts across the country: 'Everywhere in Canada there are boys and girls about your age. They go to school and work and play just as you do. Let us go to see what they are doing.'⁴⁶² The goal is to achieve familiarity and inclusiveness; David and Sally are not Others although they may live in

⁴⁶⁰ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*.p.1.

⁴⁶¹ Margaret A Robinson, ed. *Teacher's Handbook for over the Bridge*, The New World Readers (Toronto: Macmillans in Canada & Ryerson Press, 1947).p.134.

⁴⁶² Dickie, *Young Explorers*.p.x.

different parts of the country; they are introduced as ‘friends.’ As seen in the illustrations, most Canadian children are depicted as living in rural communities rather than cities. This does not accord with the 1951 census cited earlier, which indicates that 71 percent of Canadians lived in urban areas, but is more in keeping with the ‘small town values’ preferred by educators, as described by Michael Apple.⁴⁶³

Adults appear not only as parents of the ‘young Canadians’ but also as the central characters in the traditional resource-based primary industries in units including ‘Canada at Work’, ‘Working Together’, ‘The Workers’, ‘Willing Hands’ and ‘Canadians at Work’. The teacher’s manual states the purpose of the ‘Willing Hands’ unit in *Up and Away*:

Canada is a land of workers... Understanding the work of these men [farmers and lumberjacks] is important to every Canadian child. Even more important is developing the right attitude to work—admiring grit and self-reliance and ingenuity which makes these accomplishments possible, seeing the fascination of the job itself, sharing the pride of these Canadians in a good job well done.⁴⁶⁴

Agriculture is one of the few occupations where children can be shown as active participants rather than simply onlookers, and the family farm additionally illustrates family values and the virtues of working together. The teacher’s manual for *Young Explorers* explains



Fig. 5.8 Parents of ‘Young Canadians, On the Beam, p.385

that the stories in the ‘Workers’ unit ‘centre around children and involve the idea that Canadian children have a real part to play in the work of the nation.’⁴⁶⁵ Farming is modelled as a healthy occupation, ennobled by providing food not only for the nation but also the starving citizens of war-torn Europe.⁴⁶⁶ The readers assume that even urban children are familiar with—and interested in—agriculture, although some manuals suggest that teachers should explain

the differences between dairy and beef cattle and similar points.

⁴⁶³ Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.

⁴⁶⁴ Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*.p.168

⁴⁶⁵ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers*.p.164.

⁴⁶⁶ *Proud Procession*.pp.151-53.

There are few clear descriptions of parents' occupations outside agriculture. References to manufacturing work are largely negative; although Carla's father has 'a good job at the factory', the family is forced to relocate to the country to save his health.⁴⁶⁷ Other fathers work in more exciting jobs in the logging industry or as railway engineers. The overall absence of contemporary female role models, even in the traditionally female careers of teaching, nursing and office work, contrasts sharply with the courageous and competent little girls who dominate the present-day stories and the strong pioneer women in the 'Olden Days' units; the readers provide considerable material for further research in this area. The emphasis in both the readers and teachers' manuals is on exciting male-dominated resource extraction and related jobs: 'Volunteers might tell of other difficult and dangerous Canadian jobs: coal or hard-rock mining; working in a steel plant; running logs down rivers; building and repairing electrical lines; bush flying; salt-water fishing; steel construction work on skyscrapers and bridges; long-distance trucking.'⁴⁶⁸ The bush pilot particularly combines the virtues of ingenuity and excitement of exploration with modern technology: 'The Bush Pilot is an important figure in Canada. His courage, his skill and ingenuity have made many valuable contributions not only to aviation, but also to the development of northern Canada.'⁴⁶⁹

Children are encouraged to think about what they might do when they grow up; in the radio play, 'The Land Where Dreams Come True', five children discuss their ambitions.⁴⁷⁰ Interestingly, none of their career choices involve the manual occupations which dominate the readers. The two boys plan engineering and medical careers, one girl wants to write, one to design clothing and the third to be a movie star, but it becomes evident that they will have to work hard at school in order to realise their dreams.⁴⁷¹ Outside of this play, there is no suggestion whatsoever that students might aspire to professions requiring a university education; teachers are portrayed sympathetically but there is no idea that any children might want to teach. The stories of science and invention conveniently gloss over the years of studying required, jumping straight to the excitement of new discoveries in units such as 'Modern Magic', 'Science', 'The Wonders of Science' and 'World of Science'. These

⁴⁶⁷ Biehl, *All Sails Set*.p.13.

⁴⁶⁸ *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*.pp.188-89.

⁴⁶⁹ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Proud Procession*.p.77.

⁴⁷⁰ Biehl, *All Sails Set*.pp.42-56.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid*.pp.45-56.

selections generally focus on resource industries, for example, the discovery of uranium at Great Slave Lake rather than its scientific use.⁴⁷²

Gellner examines constructions of national identity in different societies, observing that:

Generally speaking, the situation in agrarian society seems to be this: the great majority of the population belongs to self-reproducing units, such as in effect educate their young on the job, in their stride, as part and parcel of the general business of living, without relying much or at all on any kind of educational specialist. A minority of the population receives specialized training.⁴⁷³

It is highly significant that the *agrarian* society described here by Gellner is *precisely* the Canadian society depicted in the school readers, especially those of the 1950s. Gellner continues:

Work, in industrial society, does not mean moving matter. The paradigm of work is no longer ploughing, reaping, thrashing. Work, in the main, is no longer the manipulation of things, but of meanings. It involves exchanging communications with other people, or manipulating the controls of a machine. The proportion of people at the coal face of nature, directly applying human physical force to natural objects is constantly diminishing. Most jobs, if not actually involving work 'with people', involve the control of buttons or switches or leavers which need to be understood, and are explicable, once again, in some standard idiom intelligible to all comers.⁴⁷⁴

It is worth noting that these school readers authorized by compulsory state education in an industrial modern society of mid-twentieth century Canada should be heavily devoted to stories about pre-industrial agrarian—even hunter-gatherer—society. The vast majority of the selections are precisely about 'the manipulation of things' – chopping down trees, planting and harvesting crops, digging ore out of the ground, and there is little suggestion that the pupils reading these texts should have ambitions beyond these occupations.

Anthropologist Eva Mackey notes that, 'Nationalism often depends upon mythological narratives of a unified nation moving progressively through time—a continuum beginning with a glorious past leading to the present and then onward to an even brighter future.'⁴⁷⁵ In the 1950s readers, these 'mythological narratives' are created through the stories of the European explorers and settlers. Every reader in this study contains at least one narrative

⁴⁷² Barrett, *Wide Open Windows*. 'Treasure at Great Bear Lake', pp.399-404.

⁴⁷³ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. p.30.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p.32.

⁴⁷⁵ Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada.*, p.23.

about Canada's early settlers and most devote an entire unit to poems and stories about 'Pioneer Days.' These stories focus on the creation of a home within an inhospitable land and the transformation of wilderness to establish a settlement.



Fig. 5.9 'The Saga of Shelter' *All Sails Set*, p.195

The process of creating a home in the wilderness is shown as a vital part of the formation of the Canadian character (Figure 5.9). The radio play 'The Saga of Shelter,' can be considered typical, described by its narrator as 'the story of how the

Ontario pioneers built their own homes in the wilderness. They made the forest barrier produce a home for them and space for fields... As their homes stood sturdy and strong, so stood their loyalty to each other, for in those pioneer days neighbours, even though distant, worked together to make this new land a fine and fruitful one.'⁴⁷⁶

While the readers show settlers building homes in the Canadian wilderness and, in the case of Scottish and Irish immigrants, beginning to consider the new land 'home,' most of the stories and poems deal with the journey to the wilderness location and the initial clearing and building. Very few show the pioneers after the construction of the first shelter and we do not follow their adventures in their new homes. The character of the pioneers is emphasised more than their activities, as exemplified in the radio play, 'The Saga of Shelter':

[The play] does not attempt to romanticize the initial difficulties of the pioneers, but shows how their courage and determination conquered all obstacles. The warmth of pioneer hospitality, the easy and democratic camaraderie of the woods, the premium placed upon resourcefulness, the love of freedom, the sense of individual worth, the forward-looking optimism tempered by a sense of present realities, all of which have gone into the amalgam of the Canadian character, are woven into this picture.'⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ Biehl, *All Sails Set.*, p.213. Ellipsis in original.

⁴⁷⁷ Biehl, Barrett, and Davidson, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany All Sails Set.* p.160.

Here the ‘democratic’ and ‘optimistic’ pioneer character exemplifies the ‘Better British’ imperial ethnicity outlined by both Darwin and McGinnis, as discussed in earlier chapters, the concept that constructing homes in the wilderness strengthens the character, that

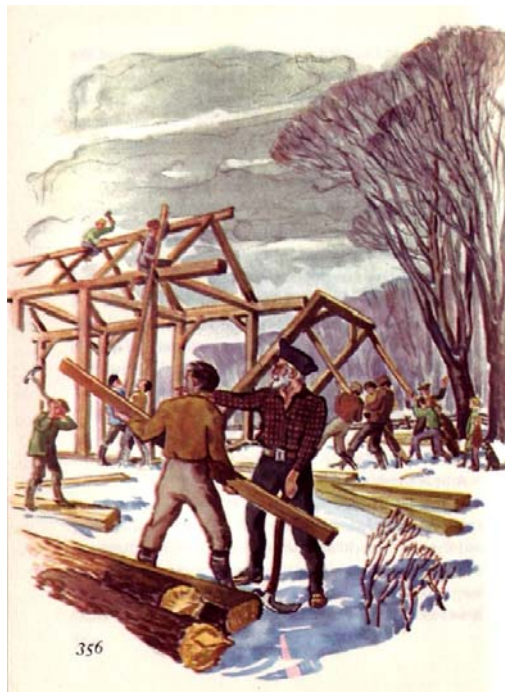


Fig. 5.10 ‘Peter Sells a Calf’, *Wide Open Windows* p.356

immigrants are stronger than those back in Britain. It also reflects the concept expressed by Ian Angus of ‘seeing ourselves as *becoming* ourselves through home-making,’ that is, the creation of Canadian identity through the actions of the pioneer ancestors in creating homes in the wilderness.⁴⁷⁸ Thus the settler becomes ‘Canadian’ through the very act of building a home unlike the transient *voyageurs* or explorers who seem to retain their identity as Scottish or French; explorers and *voyageurs* are never constructed as ‘our ancestors’.

As in the earlier readers, in addition to building homes in the wilderness, pioneers show courage in the face of predators—marauding Indians and dangerous animals.

Children are kidnapped by Indians or lost in the forest, surviving only due to their parents’—or their own—courage and common sense, while wolves, bears and cougars threaten children and livestock. Each set of readers has at least one tale of a pioneer family’s heroism and ingenuity in the face of a forest or prairie fire. Eva Mackey observes that, ‘These mythical stories require that specific versions of history are highlighted, versions that re-affirm the particular characteristics ascribed to the nation.’⁴⁷⁹ The Canadian identity constructed by the pioneer stories is based on courage, hard work and ingenuity.

Historian Gerald Friesen believes that the stories of brave settler ancestors carving homes in the wilderness ‘remove the pioneers from today’s world by making their feats unrepeatable. They exaggerate the pioneers’ qualities precisely because today’s observers

⁴⁷⁸ Angus, *A Border Within: National Identity, Cultural Plurality, and Wilderness*.p.204. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁷⁹ Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*. p.23.

want to assert the exceptional quality of their own identity. Thus story and song declare that the founders endured hard times, sacrificed, and worked very hard as they adapted to a new physical and cultural setting.⁴⁸⁰ The readers encourage children to attempt to repeat, at least on a small scale, the feats described by Friesen, by ‘playing pioneer’.

The *Teacher's Manual for Under the North Star* asks: ‘Almost everything today is ready-made. Do you think we are missing some of the fun of pioneer living?’⁴⁸¹ Similarly, the introduction to the ‘Pioneer Days’ section in *Teachers [sic] Manual to Accompany All Sails Set* expresses the idea of the excitement and appeal of pioneer life:

This Unit is intended to remind pupils of earlier days and to inspire pride in the pioneers whose toil, imagination, and courage developed the land. In this Unit, life is hard and exciting, but with *some of the appeal of a prolonged camping trip*, and there is a place in it for young and old.⁴⁸²

The idea of ‘playing pioneer’ appears in several stories including ‘Jud Goes Camping’ and accords not only with an antimodern desire for an escape from modern urban life but also an attempt to literally recreate the past exploits of the early settlers.⁴⁸³

In addition to ‘playing pioneer’ by camping, the teachers’ manuals suggest children attempt numerous pioneer crafts and activities as featured in the selections, for example, ‘Brooms for Sale’: ‘Make miniature brooms, preferably from some soft and manageable wood, like cedar, according to the directions in the story.’⁴⁸⁴ Other proposed activities include ‘whittling, carving, other types of woodwork, rug-hooking and sketching.’⁴⁸⁵ Group projects and enterprises involve visiting heritage sites, followed by the creation of museum-style dioramas of pioneer life—‘It is surprising what can be done with cardboard, crepe-paper, cellophane, lead, tea-paper, twigs, etc.’—in addition to collecting and making displays of artifacts.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁰ Gerald Friesen, *Citizens and Nation - an Essay on History, Communication, and Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).p.72.

⁴⁸¹ George Noble and Harry Fisher, *Teacher's Manual for under the North Star*, The New World Readers (Toronto: The Ryerson Press/ The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1961). p.131.

⁴⁸² Biehl, Barrett, and Davidson, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany All Sails Set*. p.140. Italics mine.

⁴⁸³ Barrett, *Wide Open Windows.*, pp.88-112.

⁴⁸⁴ Barrett, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows.*, p.204.

⁴⁸⁵ Fred C. Biehl, F.L. Barrett, and True Davidson, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany All Sails Set*ibid. (1949)., p.29.

⁴⁸⁶ Franklin L. Barrett, ed. *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows*ibid. (1948)., p.212.

Despite the notion that constructing a shelter in the wilderness might be viewed as ‘a prolonged camping trip’ within the readers, the editors did not trivialise the exploits of the settlers. Children are expected to develop a sense of gratitude to the pioneer ancestors who cleared the wilderness in the face of danger:

Those of us who live in the comparative comfort and enjoy the conveniences of to-day are prone to forget the hardships and the toil which made our comforts possible. This unit of our Reader is intended to remind pupils of those earlier days and to inspire in them a pride in the pioneers who toiled for us, whose imaginations conceived, and whose courage developed, this great land.⁴⁸⁷

The frequent repetition of phrases such as ‘the pioneers who toiled for us’ and ‘our ancestors’ create direct links to the British settlers and their activities, inventing both mythical pioneer ancestors and the settler tradition for young Canadians. Through immersive activities—plays, choral readings, museum visits, projects and crafts—children are invited to ‘play pioneer’, vicariously taking on the identity of settlers and thus inheriting ‘Canadian-ness’.

The characteristics of hard work, tempered by optimism and resourcefulness as described in the teacher’s notes to ‘The Saga of Shelter’ are also those required for modern industry. The value placed on these characteristics forms a link between the romantic pioneers of ‘olden days’ and the modern workers—the parents of the Young Canadians—opening up the Canadian wilderness for resource extraction, effectively forming the ‘continuum beginning with a glorious past leading to the present and then onward to an even brighter future’ as described by Mackey.⁴⁸⁸

Mackey writes that in the construction of Canadian identity, ‘it is the definers of the project—usually white and most often British settlers—who authorise and define similarities and differences. They are the unmarked, unhyphenated, and hence normative, *Canadian*-Canadians who are thus implicitly constructed as the authentic and *real* Canadian people, while all others are hyphenated and marked as *cultural*.’⁴⁸⁹ Here it should be noted that within the readers, while the white British settler identity is enforced by interactions with Others, the *only* ‘hyphenated’ Canadians are French Canadians.

⁴⁸⁷ Fred C. Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*, ed. J. Ranton McIntoshibid. (Copp Clark Publishing Co. Limited)., p.168.

⁴⁸⁸ Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada.*, p.23.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid. p.89. Italics in original.

The teacher's guide *to Up and Away* explains the philosophy of the editors of the *Canadian Reading Development* series, a philosophy shared by the editors of the other three series:

In selecting the stories for this unit, the editors have made no racial distinctions but have treated the children of all racial origins who live and work in together in Canada as young Canadians without hyphens. This theme of racial and social tolerance is one to be treated as normal and accepted, not to be debated in divisive arguments. It is not children but adults who raise the problem of social tolerance.⁴⁹⁰

Regardless of intentions, the British settler identity is enforced through encounters with children of other cultures, all of who are portrayed as distinctly Other. Indeed, the primary purpose of the Others in the readers is to model tolerance and understanding in the Young Canadian descendants of the British settlers.

Inhabitants - 'The French came first.'

Only the Indians and Eskimos lived in Canada before the forefathers of the rest of our people came from other countries across the seas. The French came first. They have been here a long time. Then the British came.⁴⁹¹

This simple introduction to *Gay Adventurers* neatly summarizes the approach to the French presence in North America. There are no explicit references to wars between French and English, including the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, and Generals Wolfe and Montcalm do not appear among the romantic figures of Canadian history. The poem 'French Pioneers' asks, 'New France, New Spain, New England,/ Which will it be?/ Who will win the new land,/ The land across the sea?' but the question remains unanswered, effectively erasing any European conflict in the New World.⁴⁹²

Throughout the readers, the French are consistently acknowledged as the earliest European explorers and inhabitants of the Canadian wilderness. The narrative poem, 'Jacques Cartier' by politician and Father of Confederation, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, appears in each series of readers from 1909 to the 1970s. In *Gay Adventurers*, the poem is accompanied by an illustration showing Cartier planting the French flag, watched by Indians; in this case at least some appear to be bowing to European superiority.

⁴⁹⁰ Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*.p.1.

⁴⁹¹ Dickie, *Gay Adventurers*. p.x.

⁴⁹² Barrett, *Wide Open Windows*. p.332.

Romantic tales of the French presence in Canada's past made a great impression on young readers, as illustrated in 'The Silver Tomahawk':

Visions of the *Coueurs de Bois* flashed back into Gerald's mind... "Can't you see those birchbark canoes coming round the point—the sun shining on the breastplates of the Frenchmen who sit in the middle of the canoe with loaded muskets across their knees..."

"Gee," said Stephen, "that's good. Where'd you get all that stuff?"

"It's Canadian history—I think," said Gerald uncertainly. "I read it somewhere, and McLeod told me about Champlain being here."⁴⁹³

Stories of French explorers and *coueurs de bois* provide a spark of romance and excitement, especially when compared to the relatively prosaic lives of the pioneer settlers.

The trope of the British and French 'founding races' is firmly established in each series. French settlers also cleared forests and constructed homes and are therefore Canadians, as explained in the teachers' manual for *Riding with the Sun*: 'Long ago, when this land was "new" and only Indians lived here, people from France came and made their homes along the St. Lawrence River. The descendants of these people still live in this part of Canada.'⁴⁹⁴ These descendants are described as 'kindly, home-loving people.'⁴⁹⁵ While present-day English Canadian children visit friends and relatives across the country, French Canadian children are located firmly in Quebec, their lives revolving around maple syrup and hooked rugs. The teacher's manual for *Young Explorers* clearly constructs French Canadians as Other:

In giving the setting the teacher should tell the class that the people of Quebec came from France to Canada a long time ago and still keep some of their old-fashioned ways. A study of the pictures of the milk cart and the village with its French-Canadian houses and church, with talk about them, will help the pupils to sense the fact that Quebec is a different and fascinating part of Canada.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹³ Watson, Bate, and Boyle, *On the Beam.*, pp.33-34.

⁴⁹⁴ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun.*p.11.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*p.11.

⁴⁹⁶ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers.*pp.57-58.



Fig. 5.11 'The Land We Love', *Under the North Star*, p.347

While the readers acknowledge a present-day French Canadian presence, the people of Quebec are constructed through the lens of English Canadian tourists visiting a foreign land.

*Inhabitants - 'New' Canadians - 'Just as good Canadians as we are'*⁴⁹⁷

The multicultural aspect of Canadian national identity first introduced in 'Canada's Child' in *Golden Windows* (Grade Three, 1938-1950) is enforced through stories of 'New Canadians' being transformed from Other to Canadian. While the French settlers, like their British counterparts, have earned the right to be considered 'Canadian' by clearing the land and

making homes in the wilderness, more recent immigrants need help in adapting to their new land. Every reader includes at least one selection on newcomers to Canada, generally emphasising the 'gifts' immigrants bring. In each of these stories, Mackey's 'Canadian-Canadians' demonstrate kindness and learn tolerance, while realising that immigrants make Canada a better place for all. All stories reveal the hidden talents of the immigrants, usually in sports or arts but also in agriculture. By welcoming newcomers and helping them integrate, Canadian children become better citizens.

Because the readers were published immediately after World War II, one might expect the selections would represent post-war Canadian immigration policies. This is not the case. As J.L. Granatstein et al. report in *Twentieth Century Canada*: 'Beginning in 1930, and for most of the next two decades of depression and war, almost no one came to Canada. Her doors were shut as firmly as they could possibly be. Only by 1948 was a newly confident Canada, emerging prosperous and powerful from a victorious war, prepared to accept any of the world's homeless, hungry, and disposed.'⁴⁹⁸ The presence of Ukrainian and Polish immigrants in the

⁴⁹⁷ Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*.p.33.

⁴⁹⁸ J.L. Granatstein et al., *Twentieth Century Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1983).pp.263-64.

prairies 'From Ukrainia to Canada', 'Anna's Surprise' and 'They Helped Themselves' reflects the overall trend of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century immigration which encouraged northern European agriculturalists.⁴⁹⁹ The presence of three stories about Czechoslovakian 'New Canadians': 'Czechs to Cannucks', 'Circumstances Alter Carla' and 'Elsa Skis for the School' can be attributed to Canada's acceptance of a 'sizeable number of Sudeten refugees on the basis that their professional skills and farming experience would be of benefit to Canada'.⁵⁰⁰ A single Chinese farmer appears in 'Charlie's Place' and a Japanese child is referenced in 'Canada's Child'; otherwise there are no New Canadians of Asian or African descent and none from the Mediterranean; this absence is generally representative of immigration to Canadian during the nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth century. Although most immigrants during this period came from Britain and the United States, 'The Silver Tomahawk' is the only contemporary story of newcomers from these countries, both pupils at a boys' boarding school.⁵⁰¹

Some stories in the readers could be considered as enforcing the intentions of World War II Canadian government propaganda: 'Not only was it aimed at generating support for the war effort generally, but it was also designed to foster loyalty to Canada among immigrant groups and to encourage tolerance among native Canadians of the foreigners in their midst. The latter objective was a pressing one for the government, since public hostility towards enemy aliens was made manifest immediately upon Canada's entry into the war.'⁵⁰² 'Czechs to Cannucks' depicts the community's pride in the return of local war heroes—the sons of Czech immigrants—to their small town in rural Canada.⁵⁰³ Immigrants' loyalty to Canada is also expressed in 'They Helped Themselves'. A boy writes about his classmate, Mike Podolsky: 'He's Polish, and you can tell it from his speech when he gets excited. But if there's anyone who says that Mike isn't as good a Canadian as anyone else, that person will have to fight Mike—and the rest of our gang, too.'⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁹ Kelley and Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*.pp.128-32.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.p.263.

⁵⁰¹ Watson, Bate, and Boyle, *On the Beam*.pp.30-41.

⁵⁰² Kelley and Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*.pp.271-72.

⁵⁰³ G.H. Dobrindt, ed. *My World and I*, The New World Readers (Toronto: Ryerson : Macmillan, 1946).pp.49-54.

⁵⁰⁴ Biehl, *All Sails Set*.p.4.

The stories of New Canadians seem very heavy-handed by twenty-first century Canadian standards. The strong emphasis on tolerance and understanding suggests that newcomers were met with a great deal of hostility and suspicion, not only from children but also adults. In several instances, immigrant children introduce their parents to Canadian society and their value is immediately perceived; in 'The Prize Calf' the immigrant father's skill with animals becomes apparent and he is accepted by the farming community.⁵⁰⁵ The teachers' manual for *Up and Away* states:

'The spirit of *Welcome...* should be the keynote of the study of this unit. If Canada is to continue to be an example of successful democracy, people from other lands who come to our midst must be made to feel at home and not regarded as "foreigners". The tolerance and cordiality expressed in the lines:

"We won't understand all the words that we say,
But I'm sure that we both will know how to play"

are fundamental to a desirable attitude towards newcomers to Canada, and towards those who live in other parts of the world.'⁵⁰⁶

The teacher's manual for *Up and Away* explains the 'citizen theme' of the 'The Prize Calf': 'Families from foreign lands who come to Canada to-day will in time become just as good Canadians as we are. By being friends with them, and helping them wherever we can, we can help them to become good Canadians quicker.'⁵⁰⁷

Immigrant children are shown becoming 'good Canadians' through sport: 'Elsa Skis for the School' 'is a story in which a new Canadian "stars" for her school, as a result of an art which she learned in her native Czechoslovakia. It is intended to stir up greater appreciation for the skills and arts of the new Canadians among us, and to teach children to make newcomers feel at home.'⁵⁰⁸ 'Dutchy Becomes a Canadian' makes it clear that excelling at sport is the key to becoming Canadian. The boy is an outsider until he takes part in a skating race: 'This was not Holland. This was Canada, and tonight he must win his place as a Canadian among his Canadian schoolmates.'⁵⁰⁹ The race is won: 'Now he was one of them. Now he was a Canadian.'

Inhabitants - Aboriginal Others

While consistently acknowledged as predating Europeans in the land that became Canada, Aboriginal children are—and remain—distinctly Other, not only through depictions of their

⁵⁰⁵ McKee, *Up and Away*.pp.36-47.

⁵⁰⁶ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*.p.52.

⁵⁰⁷ Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away*.p.33.

⁵⁰⁸ Dobrindt and Brand, *Teacher's Handbook for My World and I*.p.29.

⁵⁰⁹ Dickie, *Young Explorers*.p.83.

clothing, activities and geographical locations, but also through their place within the readers. Stories of Inuit children are placed in units on ‘Other Lands’ or ‘In the Far North’, while First Nations appear in ‘Days of Old,’ as people of a distant past; the rare stories of contemporary First Nations children are set on remote reserves. In the 1950s readers, the role of Aboriginal people in constructing Canadian identity is primarily to enforce the British settler identity by appearing as exotic Others. The historic stories enforce the courage of the pioneers while present-day selections allowing Canadians to model desirable traits of tolerance and understanding of Others.

Unlike the readers authorized from 1937 to 1950, and the readers of the 1960s, the 1950s readers include very few Aboriginal legends, with only six stories appearing in three of the twelve readers. All but one of these selections reappear, along with others, in readers used through the 1960s, so will be examined in Chapter Six. All the 1950s series but *Canadian Reading Development* include extracts from ‘The Song of Hiawatha’; again, these selections are repeated in the 1960s readers and will be discussed in conjunction with the legends. Here it is sufficient to say that, overall, the readers of the 1950s do not attempt to incorporate Aboriginal culture into Canadian identity through the use of traditional stories.

While the portrayal of First Nations as untrustworthy savages and baby-thieves is maintained in historical stories such as ‘Kidnapped’, in the 1950s readers it is overridden by the trope of the Vanishing Indian. Historian Daniel Francis explains:

The Vanishing Indian was a very expedient notion. It was reinforced by the perception that Indians seemed to serve no useful purpose in the modern world... in the minds of many Whites, they presented a threat to the peaceful expansion of settlement. Encouraged by their image-makers to believe that this was the direction in which events were unfolding naturally, Whites had little reason to question the process.⁵¹⁰

Within the readers, once the pioneers have established themselves and communities begin to develop, few Indians appear—reflective of the fact that as settlers colonised the land, Aboriginal people moved to less inhabited parts of the country—or were assimilated. This also indicates the disappearance of wilderness. Within the readers, the Vanishing Indian is an antimodern construct, a romantic creature of the distant past.

While the Indians were being driven away by encroaching settlers, artists attempted to capture the Vanishing Indian. Daniel Francis reports that, ‘The “fact” that Indians were a

⁵¹⁰ Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*. p.59.

vanishing breed made them especially attractive to artists... Artists like Paul Kane who chose to portray the Indian believed they were saving an entire people from extinction; not literally, of course, but in the sense that they were preserving on canvas, and later on film, a record of a dying culture before it expired forever.⁵¹¹ 'Paul Kane: Artist Adventurer [A Radio Play],' included in both editions of *My World and I*, describes the artist's attempts to capture the Vanishing Indian.⁵¹² As noted earlier, while radio plays might seem an odd medium for a lesson on a visual artist, Canadian children were very familiar with school broadcasts.⁵¹³

The romantic image of the Vanishing Indian is promoted throughout the readers, where the First Nations are generally portrayed as people of Canada's distant past, superseded by modernity. 'Indian Children,' by American children's writer, Annette Wynne, makes its first appearance in Ontario in the 1939 Grade Two reader, *A Garden of Stories*, and is included in each generation of Grade Four to Six readers from 1950 to 1970.⁵¹⁴ The poem introduces young children to the fact that North America was inhabited by Aboriginal people before the arrival of the Europeans and that Europeans have had a significant effect on both the landscape and the earlier inhabitants. The comparison of the same terrain in the past and present fits the pedagogical concept of introducing a child first to the home and immediate environment before exploring the world beyond and meets the objective of children gaining an 'understanding of the countryside and the town or city as forming a social unit,' as well as exploring their neighbourhood and 'stories of pioneer travel on the same route.'⁵¹⁵ The references to familiar buildings in the child's real world—school, shops, houses, churches—give the poem credibility, enforced by the realistic illustrations in many of the readers. There is no suggestion within the poem that 'Indian people' exist today and no indication as to why they are no longer present 'Where we live and work and play' or where they might have gone. The use of 'our native land', in addition to confirming European ownership of the land, implies that the readers are also born in North America. The author is American, so possibly the reference to 'Our home and native land,' the opening line of 'O Canada', is not significant.

Some Indians did not simply disappear but were removed to reserves, as shown in 'Red Coats' and 'The Royal Mounted and the Whiskey Traders.' In both cases, the First

⁵¹¹ Ibid. pp.23-24.

⁵¹² Dobrindt, *My World and I*. pp.92-106.

⁵¹³ Lambert, *School Broadcasting in Canada*. Lambert provides a detailed but highly technical history of educational broadcasting, dealing more with process and politics than content.

⁵¹⁴ The poem also appears in both editions of *Over the Bridge* and *Adventure Awaits*.

⁵¹⁵ Ontario, "Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937.", pp.63-64.

Nations are constructed as childish—sulky teenagers easily quelled by the appearance of a Red Coat—and needing protection from the conniving White Man, whereas the RCMP are positioned as wise adult protectors, representatives of British imperialism in the form of the Queen. As these two stories appear only in *Proud Procession*, the Grade Six book in the *Canadian Parade* series authorised in Ontario from 1950 to 1958, it is unlikely that they were highly influential in Ontario children's constructions of the First Nations. The primary purpose of the stories is to emphasise the role of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as representatives of law and order in the West, while the explanation of reserves helps to explain the absence of First Nations in present-day Canada.

Contemporary stories about First Nations life present somewhat different descriptions of Indian reserves.⁵¹⁶ The imagery used in 'Red Coats' of Indians being 'rounded up' and confined to a reserve implies a degree of captivity. Modern reserves appear to offer a greater degree of freedom as the families come and go as they please, as in the story of 'Nehemiah Teaboy, Trapper': 'In the summer we live on our reserve. It lies on a large lake in northern Manitoba. Some of our families have houses, others live in wigwams. We have a church, a school and a trading post on our reserve. It is a hundred forty miles from a railway.'⁵¹⁷ *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers* offers an explanation of reserves:

It might be well, too, to explain briefly and simply what Nehemiah means by 'our reserve'. When the Canadian Government bought the lands of Western Canada from the Indians, they set aside, in each province, large tracts of good land to be the homes of the different tribes forever. These lands are called 'reserves'. Nehemiah tells us how his family of Cree Indians live upon their reserve, how they make a living, and a little about the good times they have.⁵¹⁸

The family in 'Danny Whiteduck's Reward,' is depicted as living in a cabin on an island. It is not apparent that their home is on a reservation until about half-way through the story when, 'Danny could see now that the fire was coming towards the Reservation. It was on the Island... the whole Reservation might be wiped out.'⁵¹⁹ The *Teacher's Handbook for over the Bridge* locates the story specifically on 'the Indian reservation near Temagami in northern Ontario.'⁵²⁰ In 'Next Door Neighbours,' David describes a reserve he has seen: 'I drove through an Indian

⁵¹⁶ While today in Canada the term 'reserve' is the usual terminology, the American 'Indian reservation' is frequently used in the readers, especially those set in the Canadian West.

⁵¹⁷ Dickie, *Young Explorers.*, p.221.

⁵¹⁸ *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Young Explorers.*, pp.166-167.

⁵¹⁹ Robinson and Tomey, *Over the Bridge.*, pp.374-375.

⁵²⁰ Margaret A Robinson, ed. *Teacher's Handbook for over the Bridge*ibid. (Macmillans in Canada & Ryerson Press, 1947)., p.155.

reserve one summer. It looked as if they were all so poor.’⁵²¹ The *Teacher's Guide to On the Beam* notes that, ‘Some Canadian boys and girls may think of Indians, vaguely, as savages living very primitively, or as poor and rather ignorant people sewing beads on moccasins or selling birch bark canoes. A limited number of Canadians realize that many Indians have left their reservations to become Canadian citizens and to take an important part in the life and progress of our country.’⁵²² David does not realise that his new friend is Native precisely because they meet outside the boundaries of the reserve.

‘Next Door Neighbours’ is identified as written specifically for *On the Beam*, one of two stories ‘intended to further an attitude of acceptance and sympathy with two minority groups—the “new” Canadian and the Indian’; the irony is likely unintentional.⁵²³ In her chapter on ‘Realistic Fiction,’ librarian Sheila Egoff examines a number of children’s books about ‘modern Indians,’ a theme created by the ‘sociological and racial implications of the meeting of European and indigenous cultures in modern times.’ She reports that ‘in all these stories the cultural difference becomes a “problem” and it is the *raison d’être* of the novel—that is, the problem provides the only plot mechanism.’ In one case she notes that ‘one would not say “this is the story of a friendship between two boys”, but between a white boy and an *Indian* boy.’⁵²⁴ ‘Next Door Neighbours’ seems to join several other stories purpose-written for the readers in Egoff’s category of ‘Stories of Sociological Interest’ or ‘problem stories,’ and is the precursor for similar stories concerning Aboriginal youth in the 1960s readers.

David McAllister is vacationing with his family on a ‘remote British Columbia lake.’⁵²⁵ He is stranded when his canoe drifts away, only to be returned by Jack. David describes his new friend to his parents: ““He knows absolutely everything about the woods... He can light a fire in a few minutes without matches, blaze a trail with secret signs so his uncle can find him, and move so quietly that I can scarcely hear him coming.”” The boys spend the vacation exploring the environs of the lake, with the story culminating in Jack’s rescue of a neighbour’s infant. The grateful parents offer a reward—whatever he wants most.

⁵²¹ Watson, Bate, and Boyle, *On the Beam*., p.59.

⁵²² Watson, *Teacher's Guide to on the Beam*.p.20. The *Guide* does not attempt to explain the complicated relationships between living on a reserve, maintaining Indian status and having Canadian citizenship; these have changed since the story was published in 1950 but remain controversial.

⁵²³ Ibid., p.1. The other story, ‘At Charlie’s Place’, is the story of teenagers helping a Chinese ‘New Canadian’ farmer.

⁵²⁴ Egoff, *The Republic of Childhood: A Critical Guide to Canadian Children's Literature*. p.171. Italics in original.

⁵²⁵ Watson, Bate, and Boyle, *On the Beam*., pp.50-64.

“I want most,” Jack spoke with an eagerness David had not heard in his voice before, “I want most, to go to High School, next September.”
 “Well, why not?” David blurted out in astonishment.
 Jack’s face grew clouded. As he gave the answer, David noticed that he squared his shoulders.
 “There is no High School where I live on the Six Nations Reserve,” was his quiet reply...
 David heard no more. This conversation belonged, not to him, but to his Indian friend, Jack.

Jack is invited to live with David’s family while attending High School; he accepts but states: ““But I’ll go back to the Reserve afterwards, you know.”” The McAllisters agree, the father remarking: ““Who knows, some day you and David may work together on our mutual problems.””⁵²⁶

Daniel Francis reminds us that:

Few children in Canada had any direct knowledge of Native people, who were pretty much confined to their reserves at the margins of society. Instead, White kids were exposed to images of the Indian created by various White writers and educators. These images were not all negative. On the contrary, many were very positive. But they were not authentic: they represented the concerns and prejudices of White adult society instead of actual Native Canadians.⁵²⁷

‘Next Door Neighbours’ evidently reflects English Canadian adult anxieties about Aboriginal relations, attempting to make them into children’s concerns. David speaks ‘with unusual earnestness as if, boy though he was, he had given the matter much thought... “Dad says, when I grow up, I must remember how I feel now, and then perhaps when I understand more about it I can do something.”’ The *Teacher’s Guide* notes that, ‘The story is not intended to lead the children of Grade Six to a study of a problem handed down to us by our forebears, but it should help them to be aware that such a problem exists.’⁵²⁸

The story is obviously intended as a springboard for classroom discussion on Aboriginal issues. The *Teacher’s Guide to On the Beam* dissects the story, guiding the teacher carefully through the discovery of Jack’s identity, and supplying the ‘correct’ answers:

When David hears that Jack comes from a farm near Brantford, he has received his third clue that the boy is an Indian; in what way could this information be considered a clue? (A boy from Toronto, interested in Indian names, might easily have heard of the Brant Indian Reserve.) What were the

⁵²⁶ Ibid. pp.63-64.

⁵²⁷ Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture.* , p.145.

⁵²⁸ Watson, *Teacher’s Guide to on the Beam.* p.20

other two clues? (Jack's dark complexion; his unusual reserve of manner and speech.)⁵²⁹

The detailed provision of 'correct' answers and extensive information on treaty negotiations suggest that many teachers would not be prepared to lead this discussion of their own accord.

Inhabitants - 'Eskimos'

While the *Canadian Reading Development* series places Inuit stories in northern units: 'Canada's Northlands', 'Neath the Midnight Sun' and 'Under the Northern Lights', the *New World Readers* locate their Arctic stories in 'Friends in Far-off Lands,' amid tales about Sumatra, China, Iceland and Kashmir. This placement supports cultural historian Renée Hulan's statement that in children's literature, 'Inuit culture has been used (among other aboriginal cultures) to teach difference, and now tolerance of differences.'⁵³⁰

The Eskimo's daily life is so far removed from the child reader that the Eskimo is positioned as a very remote and distant Other. While most of the Eskimos in the stories are specifically acknowledged to be living in Canada, the authors seem reluctant to acknowledge them as 'Canadian,' for example in 'The House That Kak Built.'⁵³¹ Twelve-year-old Copper Eskimo Kak is asked to take the dog sled and fetch meat from a dead whale. The story continues: 'Had Kak been a Canadian schoolboy, he would have said, "All right, Dad," and gone on eating his breakfast. He would not have shown how excited he was.' The story is specifically set in 'on Victoria Island in the far north of Canada,' so 'Canadian' evidently means 'white British settler,' but one wonders if this would be clear to the nine-year-old Grade Four pupils. While other stories clearly acknowledge Eskimos as living in Canada, there is no suggestion that Ontario school children might visit the remote Arctic. Only the *Teacher's Handbook for under the North Star* asks: 'Does this story make you wish that you could visit the Eskimos?'⁵³²

In *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture*, Renée Hulan observes that, 'The difficulty with outsiders' versions of Inuit life is not that they are more or less authentic, but that they have been received as authentic. Images of Inuit have been controlled,

⁵²⁹ Ibid., p.22.

⁵³⁰ Renée Hulan, *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture*, McGill - Queen's Native and Northern Series (Montréal; London McGill - Queen's University Press, 2002)., p.72.

⁵³¹ McKee, *Up and Away*., pp.239-264.

⁵³² Norton and Boyce, *Teacher's Handbook for under the North Star*., p.56.

historically at least, by non-Inuit.⁵³³ The readers play a definite role in the presentation of Inuit life by non-Inuit and in establishing ‘authentic’ representations of Inuit life from a position of authority. ‘The Canadian Eskimo’ in *Wide Open Windows* is a lengthy exposition describing Eskimo culture under the headings of ‘His House and Furnishings,’ ‘His Habits of Dress, Eating and Travel,’ ‘His Weapons and Tools,’ ‘His Amusements,’ and ‘He Learns from the White Man,’ a description more typical of late-nineteenth century geography text or travelogue than a selection in a mid-twentieth century reader.⁵³⁴ The accompanying teachers’ manual states that, ‘The Eskimos are just one more kind of North American Indian. Like the rest of the Indians they came from Asia many thousands of years ago. They differ among themselves almost as European people do.’⁵³⁵ The selection stresses the inventiveness and ingenuity of the Eskimo, but also is rife with British settler value judgements: ‘If an Eskimo had the chance, he might like to live in a wooden house.’⁵³⁶ The selection portrays the Eskimo as primitive and superstitious—characteristics that are not prominent in the fictional accounts of Eskimos throughout the readers—yet carrying far more authority than fictional accounts like ‘Kak’s Snow House’. The account concludes:

As Eskimos learn more about the white man, we might imagine they would like to leave the cold northland, and come down here to live. But that isn’t very likely. A few have been brought south by missionaries or the Mounties, but they have been very unhappy. They couldn’t get used to our food, and some of them were so homesick they became quite ill. Then, too, many diseases which affect us only slightly, are fatal to them. So the Eskimo is much better off in his own northern land, and no doubt will be quite content to stay there.⁵³⁷

The activities described in both fiction and non-fiction—hunting seal or caribou, making fur clothing, carving walrus tusks—are generally far beyond the scope of classroom projects, although the *Teacher’s Guide to On the Beam* ambitiously suggests igloo building as a possible ‘Related Activity’ when studying ‘Nanook, the Polar Bear: ‘If this lesson is studied in winter, and there is enough snow, the children might enjoy building an igloo, after carefully studying the method the Eskimos use.’⁵³⁸ This is the only activity that might allow children to ‘play Eskimo.’ While several simple drawing and painting activities are suggested, the

⁵³³ Hulan, *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture.*, p.81.

⁵³⁴ The author, Nora Hickson Kelly, taught in Saskatchewan during the Depression years, married an RCMP constable in 1940 and wrote books about the Mounties, primarily historical accounts for children. I found no evidence that she was an expert on Eskimo life. She contributed other stories to the *Canadian Reading Development Series*, primarily about the RCMP.

⁵³⁵ Barrett, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany Wide Open Windows.*, p.164.

⁵³⁶ Barrett, *Wide Open Windows.*, p.280.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.* p.288.

⁵³⁸ Watson, *Teacher’s Guide to on the Beam.*, p.92.

preferred activity is the construction of dioramas to illustrate Inuit life, as described in the teacher's manuals. The manual for *Up & Away* provides detailed instructions to accompany 'The House that Kak Built'. Warning: twenty-first century school teachers may find this account disturbing!

Make a sand-table model of an Eskimo village. Snow and ice may be modelled from asbestos paste power. Paraffin wax poured in a bowl for a mould will make an igloo. Seals, polar bears, Eskimo igloos may be carved from plasticine, paraffin wax, or soap. Weapons, kayaks, etc., may be whittled from wood. Blue cellophane makes open water. A sheet of Bristol board may be coloured to form a background of the northern lights.⁵³⁹

Rather than immersive activities that might allow children to emulate—and thus identify—with the Eskimo, the creation of museum-style dioramas serves to emphasise the differences between Inuit life and that in the southern parts of the country and position the Inuit firmly as a distant and unknowable Other.

Summary

The readers represent the cultural hegemony of English Canadian educators in their deliberate creation of a preferred version of Canadian national identity. To this end, they show Canadian children what their country looks like by defining its boundaries and geographical features, and creating a sense of ownership and familiarity through imaginary journeys 'from sea to sea'. The characteristics of the regions are established and cultural values are imparted to the landscape, with rural and wilderness landscapes and activities greatly valued over modern urban locations and industries. Canada is constructed geographically rather than politically, with the Canadian Shield established as the defining Canadian landscape.

Children are introduced to their fellow Canadians, who share a British Protestant settler heritage built upon the common values of hard work and cooperation, not conflict. The responsibilities of Canadian citizenship are defined and expected behaviours modelled by example, especially through encounters with Others.

These readers could be considered children's handbooks on Canadian citizenship. Pupils are continually reminded of their roles as Canadian citizens, not only by the examples in units on 'Young Canadians' but also in units including 'Heroism' and 'Canadians at Work.' The teachers' manuals provide detailed questions on each selection, quizzing the pupils on

⁵³⁹ Biehl, *Teachers [Sic] Manual to Accompany up and Away.*, p.162.

every aspect of Canada as depicted in the readers; by the end of Grade Six a comprehensive view of not only the physical geography but also the cultural heritage of the nation has been constructed. Canadian national identity is not entirely imposed: through immersive activities—plays, choral readings, songs and crafts—children practise their roles as ‘Young Citizens of Canada,’ imagining their country by creating wall charts, acting in pageants, and writing accounts of imaginary journeys ‘from sea-to-sea,’ thus constructing their own versions of Canadian national identity.

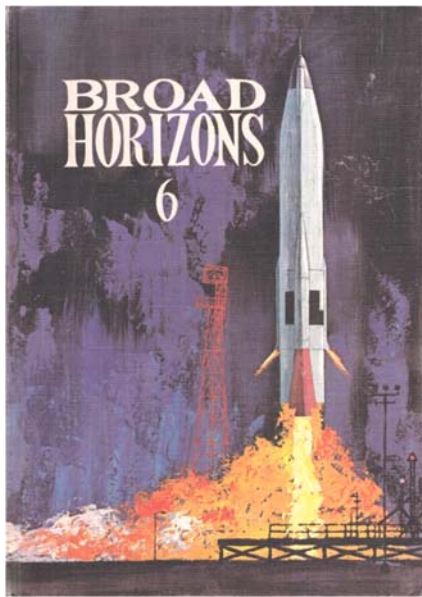


Fig. 6.1 The 1960s covers reveal an increasing interest in space travel. Broad Horizons

Chapter 6 - The 1960s Readers

This chapter considers the readers used in Ontario public schools during the 1960s and 1970s. First I examine contemporary influences, followed by a description of the readers and accompanying manuals. I then analyse the contents under the headings of Symbols and Myths, Landscape and Inhabitants. I conclude this chapter with a section on the Trading Post. The trading post incorporates the elements of symbols, landscape and inhabitants; while present throughout the readers from 1909, it is only in the readers of the 1960s that it becomes emblematic of Canadian national identity.

Between 1958 and 1962, new reading series were introduced, while others were revised and retired. (Appendix I). The *Canadian Reading Development* series, published between 1946 and 1948 was retained unaltered until 1974 and the *Highroads to Reading* series, published in 1946, was approved until 1967. The *New World Readers* were revised in 1958 and retained until 1974. The *Canadian Parade Readers*, published by Dent were discontinued in 1958; in 1962 the same publisher introduced the *Canadian Heritage Readers*, approved until 1974. Between 1960 and 1962, Canadian educational publishers Winston Holt, Nelson, and Ginn each produced reading series for Grades Four to Six; the *Canadian Basic Readers* (Winston Holt) were approved from 1960 to 1971, Nelson's *Young Canada Readers* from 1961 to 1976, and the *Canadian Ginn Basic Readers* from 1961 to 1979. For simplicity, I refer to all the readers introduced from 1958 as 'the 1960s readers'.

The new reading series introduced in the early 1960s were in use until the mid-1970s, but it must be remembered that because the textbooks took three or four years to produce, they reflect the cultural values of the period immediately before their publication, not the years they were actually in use. Thus the readers of the 1960s should be considered as more representative of Canadian culture of the late 1950s than the following decades. The significant cultural and political issues affecting Canadian national identity during the 1960s and 1970s, including official multiculturalism, Quebec separatism, Aboriginal land claims, environmentalism and even Canada's 1967 centennial celebrations are not reflected within the readers. There is also

no hint of the rapidly spreading influence of television, especially in the urban parts of the country.

Probably the most significant influence on the development of Canadian national identity during the mid-1950s and 1960s was the report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (1951), popularly referred to as the 'Massey Commission', after its Chair, Vincent Massey. Among its recommendations, the Commission urged support for Canadian publishing and the establishment of the Canada Council for the Arts.

The submissions to the Commission, which had explicitly linked discourses of Canadian nationalism and anti-Americanism with support for Canadian publishers, public libraries, and literary production to counter American mass culture were to provide an ideological basis on which support for Canadian cultural institutions was linked to the strengthening of national identity.⁵⁴⁰

Edwards and Saltman report that despite this increasing support for and awareness of Canadian children's literature, 'The majority of the most popular Canadian children's authors of the postwar era, including Roderick Haig-Brown, James Houston, Christie Harris, Jean Little, and Farley Mowat, sought first publication outside Canada.'⁵⁴¹ Most of these authors are represented in the readers of the 1960s, particularly the *Young Canada Readers* and *Canadian Heritage Readers* series. The Canadian stories within the readers are, overall, of highly literary quality and far more interesting than their 1950s predecessors which in many cases were closer to geography texts than literature.

The introduction of new readers between 1958 and 1962 seems to have been driven by changes in pedagogy rather than politics. While *Circular 14* stated that readers be 'authored by Canadians', this requirement would affect the Primary readers which were mainly American texts with the spelling altered to suit the Canadian market. These include the highly popular 'Alice and Jerry' and 'Dick and Jane' series; only the 'Mr Mugs' Primary series published by Ginn was an entirely Canadian production. As discussed in Chapter Five, the four reading series approved for Grades Four to Six in 1950 were authored (edited) by Canadians, with considerable Canadian content and an emphasis on creating Canadian national identity.

⁵⁴⁰ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.p.53.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.p.55.

School textbooks were subject to periodic reviews, providing educational publishers with the opportunity to increase their share of the highly lucrative textbook market through the production of new schoolbooks.⁵⁴² Educational publishers worked closely with classroom teachers and educational specialists in order to provide the most up-to-date materials to potential clients. Retired educational publishers Richard and Sylvia Lee detailed the process required to bring a school reader from inception to the classroom. They stressed the importance of coordinating with the provincial textbook review schedules and the need to provide in-class assistance to teachers.⁵⁴³

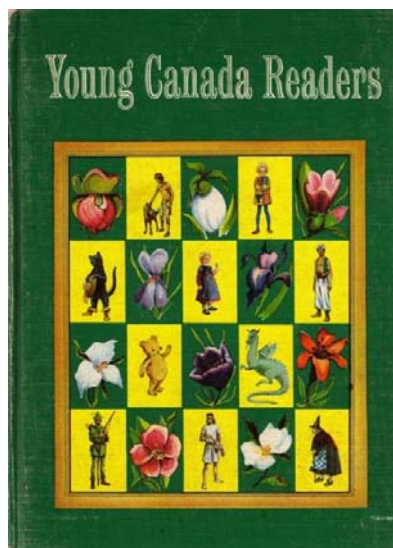


Fig. 6.2 Young Canada Readers: 4

Physically there are few differences between the new readers and their 1950s counterparts, although the *Canadian Basic Readers* are slightly taller and thinner than the other readers. Again, the cover illustrations feature a transportation theme, either more stylized or more realistic, depending upon the series. This theme is carried through into the Contents, but not generally referenced within the units. The titles are similar, phrases suggesting travel and action: *Beyond the Horizon*, *Happy Highways*. Both the covers and the contents reveal an increasing interest in space travel and *New Worlds* and *Broad Horizons* both feature space themes on their covers. The exception is the *Young Canada Readers*

series; the covers feature common design of twenty small rectangles suggestive of a quilt, each representing a selection within the reader.

A considerable amount—at least fifty percent—of material included in the 1950s readers is repeated, with new illustrations. Frequently selections are used in different grades, that is, stories which originally appeared in the Grade Five readers have moved to Grades Four or Six and vice versa. Some of the repeated stories have been altered; for example, the story of ‘Merwa’ first appears written in the third person in *Young Explorers* (1946); the same story appears as the first-person narrative, ‘Merwa the Moose’, in *Happy Highways* (1962).

⁵⁴² Clark, "The Rise and Fall of Textbook Publishing in Canada."

⁵⁴³ Richard Lee, June 19, 2011., Sylvia Lee, July 19, 2011.

Like their predecessors, the readers are divided into themed units. Most units are similar to those in the earlier readers, comprising seven or more related selections of information, poetry, prose and plays, although both the *Canadian Basic Readers* and *Canadian Heritage Readers* include units with as few as four and five selections. The five units in each of the *Young Canada Readers* consist of over twenty unrelated selections and are simply numbered as 'Part I', 'Part II', etc.

All the 1960s readers are generously illustrated with combinations of full-colour, two colour and pen-and-ink drawings. Like the 1950s readers, the Grade Four books contain more illustrations than those for Grade Six which contain more pages of plain text, generally in a smaller font. The *Young Canada Readers* are particularly dense, with fewer and smaller images; most stories have only one or two illustrations occupying less than one third of the page, in comparison to the other series which seldom have a sequence of more than six pages without illustrations. Many illustrations cover a quarter to half the page and some continue across two pages. As would be expected, the style is generally more modern than the 1950s readers and the illustrations are much crisper.

In *Picturing Canada*, Edwards and Saltman refer to the frequent lack of collaboration between author and artist in children's illustrated books as compared to picture books.⁵⁴⁴ Their observation is particularly true of the 1960s school readers, which make extensive use of excerpts from books that had few—if any—original illustrations, providing considerable scope for the publishers and their artists. Additionally, original illustrations have frequently been replaced, either for copyright reasons or possibly because they might detract from the overall design of the book. While in most cases this is not readily apparent, in some cases very well-known pictures have been replaced, for example Arthur Ransome's original illustrations for 'Escape from the Viper,' (*Peter Duck*) in *Young Canada Readers:5*. Similarly the iconic E.H. Shepard drawings have been replaced in 'Pooh Goes Visiting and Gets into a Tight Place,' (from A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*) in two Grade Four readers, *Young Canada Readers: 4* and *Adventure Awaits*.

Like the 1950s series, most of the readers include a dictionary of unfamiliar words and Acknowledgements. The *Canadian Heritage Readers* and *Young Canada Readers* series both incorporate notes giving the origins and context of the selections; the other series include these

⁵⁴⁴ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing.*, p.4

background notes in the teachers' manuals, not in the readers themselves. The *Young Canada Readers* series concludes with a lengthy reading comprehension section printed on coloured paper. None of the other series include additional materials of this sort, which would typically be found in the accompanying workbooks. While workbooks are frequently referred to in the 1960s teachers' manuals, none are included in the Ontario Historical Textbook Collection and it is possible that supplementary section in the *Young Canada Readers* was used instead of workbooks.

The teachers' manuals developed to accompany readers published after 1958 are similar to their predecessors, although there is far less emphasis on group activities and 'enterprises'; some 'class projects' are suggested, but the main focus is on developing individual reading comprehension skills. The manuals reflect concerns about the science of reading with multiple references to 'word burdens' and charts showing 'reading scales'. Additionally, teachers are expected to concentrate on the mechanics of reading, for example, tracking the pupils' eye movements: 'As the children read silently, circulate among them to give help to any who have difficulty. Watch for correct eye movements and caution any children who need a reminder to avoid lip or head movements as they read.'⁵⁴⁵

Unlike the earlier guides, there is no statement that the manual simply provides suggestions which teachers can adapt to suit their classes—the 1960s guides are far more prescriptive, providing very detailed advice and instructions for teaching reading skills, but less contextual information on the individual selections than their predecessors. The 1950 *Teacher's Guide to Over Land and Sea* reviewed earlier provides four pages of notes on teaching 'How Sally Went to School,' primarily background information about the author and the setting for the story, and questions to encourage discussion.⁵⁴⁶ In comparison, 'Lost on the Trail,' a very similar tale by the same author, merits *nine* pages of notes in the 1962 *Teaching Adventure Awaits*.⁵⁴⁷ In addition to half a page of background information, this lesson plan includes suggestions for teaching 'Comprehension and Study Skills,' 'Using an Encyclopedia' and 'Word-Study Skills'. The post-1958 manuals are generally similar in this respect, focusing more on the science of teaching reading than the content of the story, while providing detailed instructions on how to present each selection.

⁵⁴⁵ Jessie Shular, *Teaching Adventure Awaits*, The Canadian Ginn Basic Readers (Toronto: Ginn and Company, 1962). p.196.

⁵⁴⁶ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to over Land and Sea*. pp.3-6.

⁵⁴⁷ Shular, *Teaching Adventure Awaits*. pp.79-87.

The manuals designed to accompany the *Canadian Ginn Basic Readers* are by far the most prescriptive, providing scripts similar to the lesson plan for 'Jacques Cartier' in the *Treasury Manual* of the 1930s, described in Chapter Four. Each selection has clearly-defined 'objectives'; for example, the objective of 'Lost on the Trail' is: 'To realize the value of keeping a cool head in an emergency.'⁵⁴⁸ The teacher is then led through the lesson step-by-step:

Say: "Our story takes place at Lake Muskoka." Locate the Muskoka area on a map. Point out to the children that there are many such vacation areas in our country, and mention some near where they live.

Say: "Our story is about Sally, a girl who lives in Muskoka, and her friend Gail who is visiting her for the summer..."

Have the children turn to the story "Lost on the Trail," page 25, and look at the pictures. Encourage them to tell what they think happened, and then say: "Let's read and see what really did happen."⁵⁴⁹

The 1960s teachers' manuals seem to focus on developing reading comprehension skills and the garnering of information rather than reading for pleasure. There is little or no overt attempt to create a sense of Canadian national identity as part of the process of teaching reading to children in Grades Four to Six and the strong statements in the 1950s teachers' guides on the vital role of school readers in creating Canadian national identity are largely absent. Instead there is an underlying assumption that the new 1960s reading series, all of which have 'Canadian' in their titles, are produced by Canadians and reflect Canadian cultural values. The sole statement on creating national identity is the 'Introduction' in the manual accompanying *Happy Highways*, the Grade Four reader in the *Canadian Heritage Readers*. This is nearly identical to 'To the Teacher' in the 1947 manual for *Young Explorers* in the *Canadian Parade* series. Both series are published by J.M. Dent & Sons. Prominent educator Donald Dickie was the series editor for the *Canadian Parade Readers* and is listed as 'Consultant' for the 1962 *Canadian Heritage Readers*, and it is likely that these introductory statements represent her views on national identity.

Symbols and Myths

While 'Canada' appears in the title of each of the four new reading series added in the 1960s, there is nothing specifically 'Canadian' about the images on the covers, with two exceptions: the bush plane and northern landscape of *Beyond the Horizon* and the northern scene depicted on *Under the North Star*. In comparison with the 1950s readers, the 1960s readers reveal a

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid. p.79.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid. p.80.

decided lack of obvious Canadian symbols, such as the maple leaf; the exceptions are the images used to illustrate the 'A Canadian Sampler' unit in *Argosy*; with this exception, the few images of Mounties are historical. No national anthem is included and while the patriotic poems, including 'O Canada!' seen in earlier readers reappear, they are mainly relegated to the poetry sections rather than used as introductions to the readers or units on Canada. This suggests an uneasiness at the continued use of British emblems and anthems as official symbols of Canada; the Union Jack continued as Canada's official flag until replaced by the Maple Leaf in 1965 and 'O Canada' was not officially adopted as the National Anthem until 1980.⁵⁵⁰

'A Canadian Speaks' is the final selection in 'My Country', the last unit before the



Fig. 6.3 'A Canadian Speaks' *My World and I* 1958, p.378.

poetry section in the revised *My World and I*, 1958 (Figure 6.3). The article is a strong statement of Canadian national identity, precisely mirroring the 'Canada of the North' theme of Progressive Conservative leader John Diefenbaker's highly successful 1958 election campaign. Like the Earl Grey address on 'Empire Day' in the 1909 readers, it can be considered to represent an 'official' view of Canadian national identity of the day. The teacher's manual describes author John Fisher as 'a popular radio broadcaster... executive director of the Canadian Tourist

Association, promoting Canada to Canadians and to visitors,' and from 1961 the 'Public Relations Counsel to the Prime Minister of Canada [John Diefenbaker].'⁵⁵¹ The editors note that 'the tone is of romantic enthusiasm, the purpose is to arouse a pride of country in Canadians', warning that, 'The teacher should be careful, therefore, not to accept the article a source of factual information.'⁵⁵² The article serves to establish or enforce the stereotypes of Canada as a young northern nation: 'Whenever I think of a map of the world, I see Canada as a large patch of red. Red is an exciting colour and so is Canada exciting. It is young, big,

⁵⁵⁰ Heritage, "The Maple Leaf".

⁵⁵¹ Eleanor Boyce and Miriam Norton, *Teacher's Manual for My World and I*, The New World Readers (Toronto: The Ryerson Press/ The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1961).pp.154-55.

⁵⁵² Ibid.

modern and hungry for adventure.⁵⁵³ Regardless of his constant references to Canada as a modern nation, the writer expresses a strongly antimodern romantic view of Canada, privileging the wilderness over urban life and reflecting ongoing tensions between modern and antimodern constructions of Canadian national identity: ‘Despite our city and industrial growth, we still carry the brand of the outdoors upon us. We are a country of the north—a nation which trusts its jaw against the fierce odds of climate and geography.’⁵⁵⁴

‘A Canadian Sampler’ is the final unit before the poetry section in *Argosy*, suggesting the section was studied at the end of the school year. The frontispiece features an illustration of the Peace Tower framed by two Mounties on horseback. The Canadian Coat-of-Arms tops the page; beneath is an extract from *The Canadian Bill of Rights*. ‘Happy Birthday To Canada’ a cross-Canada geographical survey from west to east by journalist Bruce West appears in the same unit. The sole illustration shows maple leaves surrounded by the provincial coats-of-arms. There are no significant references to Canadian people, and, again, the wilderness and rural landscapes are emphasised.

The sparsely illustrated *Young Canada Readers* include selections on plant emblems immediately preceding the poetry section in each unit. The Grade Four book features ‘Floral Emblems of the Provinces,’ Grade Five has ‘Plant Emblems of the Homelands’ and Grade Six includes ‘Plant Emblems of Commonwealth.’ Each selection covers two plants, for example, the Pitcher-plant of Newfoundland and the Lady’s-slipper of Prince Edward Island.⁵⁵⁵ The plant emblems also appear on the covers of the readers. The role of emblems and symbols is explained briefly in each selection:

From very early times, countries, tribes, and families have used as emblems the pictures of birds, animals, flowers, or other objects... Many emblems are so well-known that writers refer to the country by naming its emblem. When we sing of the “thistle, shamrock, rose” that entwine “the maple leaf”, we understand that Scotland, Ireland, and England are connected with Canada. The plant emblems of the British Isles have a long history, but the plant emblems of the Canadian provinces were not chosen by law until our own century.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵³ G.H. Dobrindt, F.J. Gathercole, and Rev. Campbell Hughes, eds., *My World and I*, Rev Edibid. (1958).p.378.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.p.385.

⁵⁵⁵ Jean Bailey and E.J. Quick, eds., *Young Canada Readers: 4*, Treasures in Reading (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1961). P.55.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.p.55

Postage stamps and currency are common symbols of national identity and *Young Canada Readers: 5* uses stamps to illustrate seven different stories. Three are Canadian: the 1859 five-cent stamp featuring a beaver illustrates 'Blue Haze', a 1955 ten-cent stamp featuring an Inuit in a kayak accompanies 'Eskimo Charm for Light-footed Travel', and the 1935 six-cent stamp is an image of Icarus.⁵⁵⁷ The remaining stamps are from the Netherlands, Belgian Congo, Ceylon, Switzerland and Greece. These seem to be simply embellishments as they are not accompanied by explanatory notes.

Unit titles including 'Canadian Sampler' (*Argosy*), 'Family Album' (*Story Caravan*), 'Habitant Memories' (*Broad Horizons*) are suggestive of a common Canadian cultural heritage, the sense of a shared past so important in creating national identity. In addition to tales of pioneer ancestors, the majority of the selections included in these units are North American Aboriginal myths, generally referred to in both the readers and manuals as 'Indian (or 'Eskimo') legends'.

From 1909, the readers placed a strong emphasis on the classical myths and legends of ancient Greece and Rome, extracts from the Bible, Aesop's fables and numerous fairy tales, especially those by Hans Christian Andersen and the Brother Grimm. As noted in Chapter Three, British traditions dominate, with each series including the story of Dick Whittington and at least one Robin Hood adventure. The Arthurian legends appear throughout, with a full unit in the Grade Six *Treasury Reader* devoted to 'The Age of Chivalry'. This reliance on European, especially British, legends was greatly reduced in the 1950s readers, and while each of the 1960s series includes at least one Robin Hood adventure, only two of the Arthurian legends, so prominent in the readers from 1909 to the 1950s, appear: 'The Knights of the Silver Shield' in *New Worlds* and 'Sir Kay and Sir Gawain' in *Young Canada Readers: 6*.

In the 1960s readers, British legends such as Dick Whittington are replaced by North American 'tall tales' and Aboriginal legends. The 'tall tales' are, in the main, the exploits of Paul Bunyan, which, as the teacher's manual for *Under the North Star* explains, were not particular to Canada:

Paul Bunyan was a legendary hero of the lumber camps of the American Northwest. As legends go, the story of Paul Bunyan is a relatively modern one... Paul was adopted by lumbermen as their hero, and their many additions to his deeds make his legend a true folk tale.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁷ Gerald McKay and L.A. Code, eds., *Young Canada Readers: 5* (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1963). Canadian stamps listed are on pages 20, 147 and 267.

⁵⁵⁸ Noble and Fisher, *Teacher's Manual for under the North Star*.p.69.

Each of the 1960s series also includes at least one French Canadian ‘tall tale’, most written by Natalie Savage Carlson. These are humorous tales, often with *habitant* dialect, and local to Quebec, with no sustained attempt to incorporate them into the fabric of mainstream Canadian culture. In most cases, both the Paul Bunyan and French Canadian ‘tall tales’ are placed in the humorous ‘Just For Fun’ units rather than units on Canada.

While Aboriginal legends, especially those of the North American First Nations, appear in the readers from 1909, it is not until the 1960s that they are established as contributing to Canadian culture, rather than simply romantic tales of long-gone peoples, in the same vein as tales from *The Arabian Nights*. ‘Indian legends’ are sprinkled sparsely through the 1950s readers—none in the *Canadian Reading Development* series—appearing in diverse units including ‘Round the Fairy Ring’ (*Young Explorers*). In contrast, each reader introduced after 1958 include at least one ‘Indian legend’ and they form the dominant element in units such as ‘Old Tales of Canada’ (*Under the North Star*), ‘In Our Land’ (*Golden Spurs*), ‘Canadian Folk Tales’ (*Happy Highways*) and ‘Great Old Tales’ (*Beyond the Horizon*). This positioning suggests that the ‘Indian legends’ form a definite part in constructing Canadian identity, with extracts from *The Song of Hiawatha* mingled with selections purporting to be First Nations mythology. In contrast to the comical French Canadian ‘habitant’ stories and Paul Bunyan ‘tall tales’, the Aboriginal legends are intended to be taken seriously and their positioning as ‘Canadian Folk Tales’ within school readers indicates their incorporation into an official form of English Canadian national identity.

In her 1967 critique of Canadian children’s literature, librarian Sheila Egoff observes that most Canadians acquired their knowledge of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples ‘based upon versions of Indian and Eskimo tales that we have read in children’s books.’⁵⁵⁹ The ‘Indian and Eskimo tales’ included within approved school texts could be considered ‘authorized’ versions. They are mainly taken from anthologies compiled or written for children; for example, ‘The Legend of the Thunderbird’ from Hugh Weatherby’s *Tales the Totem Tell* appears in both editions of *Under the North Star* and *Happy Highways*. Egoff is generally

⁵⁵⁹ Egoff, *The Republic of Childhood: A Critical Guide to Canadian Children's Literature*.p.17.

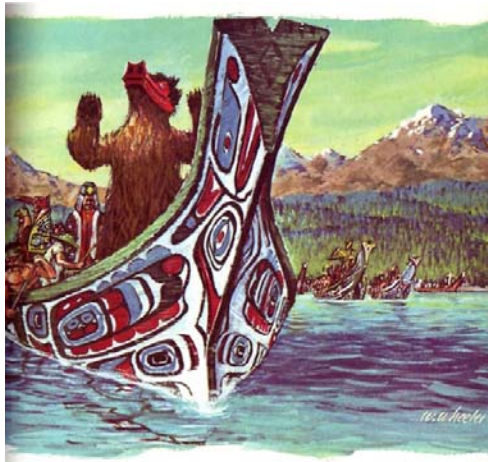


Fig. 6.3 'Great Old Tales' New Worlds, p.131

critical of these collections of Aboriginal legends, as evidenced by her review of *Tales the Totems Tell*: 'These stories of the Indians of British Columbia are retold for younger children. The inherent quality and interest of the tales are not completely destroyed by the author's over-simplification and pedestrian writing.'⁵⁶⁰

In *Picturing Canada*, Edwards and Saltman explore the incorporation of

Aboriginal culture into Canadian children's literature in considerable detail, focusing particularly on the appropriation and retelling of First Nations mythology in popular anthologies of 'Indian legends'.⁵⁶¹ They discuss the problems of translating Aboriginal stories into forms easily understood by English Canadian children: 'For librarians, teachers, and scholars, the lack of recognizable narrative structure in Aboriginal stories (recognizable at least to the non-Aboriginal reader) required intervention on the part of the reteller to impose order and familiarity.'⁵⁶² The legends within the readers all conform to a conventional narrative structure, often in the form of a moral tale or parable; many employ classic storytelling openings: 'In old times', 'Once upon a time.'

The *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun* describes 'The Two Sisters' as 'an Indian legend... different from the ordinary fairy tale which children recognize as a purely imaginary story.'⁵⁶³ This highly-edited version of Pauline Johnson's story begins: 'Many thousands of years ago there lived on the Pacific Coast a great chief, who had two beautiful daughters of the same age. They were very kind and gentle and were dearly loved by all their father's people.'⁵⁶⁴ Except for the specific location, which may not have been readily identifiable by Grade Four pupils, this is very similar to the opening lines of many traditional European fairy tales, placing the onus on the teacher to explain the difference.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid. p.53.

⁵⁶¹ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.pp.191-208.

⁵⁶² Ibid.p.199.

⁵⁶³ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*. p.20.

⁵⁶⁴ Watson, Bate, and Ryan, *Riding with the Sun*.p.47. The complete version of the story appears in *Beyond the Horizon*.

Several selections emphasise the fact that Aboriginal legends were originally spoken, not written. While most have no obvious narrator, an exception is 'Wiskok and the Water Monster' which related in the first person voice of the storyteller: '*Kwayee!* I give you the Indian greeting. I am Nawadaha, storyteller of the Micmacs.'⁵⁶⁵ Egoﬀ considers that the 'hushed, intimate quality one associates with the beginning of a story that is told rather than read is an endearing characteristic.'⁵⁶⁶ The opening lines of 'The Ghost Stallion,' one of the very few ghost stories in the Grade Four to Six readers, also establish the oral story-telling tradition:

This is a tale the old men tell around the tipi fire, when the stars are blown clean on a windy night, and the coyotes are howling on the Cree Jump. And when, sometimes, over the wind, comes clearly the sound of running horses, their hearers move a little closer to one another—and pile more wood on the fire.

This is a story from long ago, say the Old Ones.⁵⁶⁷

In the 1960s readers First Nations myths replace British legends in an attempt to create a common culture for a nation with a population of diverse ethnicity. Francis refers to the use of First Nations iconography in official representations of Canadian culture: 'Clearly the government was attempting to merge Aboriginal mythology of relevance to all Canadians, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike.'⁵⁶⁸ Edwards and Saltman confirm the role of the school readers in this incorporation of Aboriginal mythology into Canadian culture, writing that, 'the collections were intended to appeal to a distinctly Canadian readership for whom the Aboriginal stories would become part of a common Canadian heritage through their availability in public libraries and through use as an adjunct to the school curriculum.'⁵⁶⁹

The inclusion of First Nations legends in the readers could be seen simply as the acknowledgment of Aboriginal culture and the contribution of this culture to Canadian identity. However, the incorporation of Indian legends and lore into the mid-twentieth century Ontario school curriculum is closely related to the 'curious cultural phenomenon' described by Sharon Wall in her chapter on 'Totem Poles, Tepees, and Token Traditions'.⁵⁷⁰ Wall

⁵⁶⁵ W. John McIntosh and H. Elizabeth Orchard, eds., *Beyond the Horizon* (Toronto: Ginn, 1962).pp.260-67.

⁵⁶⁶ Egoﬀ, *The Republic of Childhood: A Critical Guide to Canadian Children's Literature*. p.27.

⁵⁶⁷ K.M. Given and L.A. Code, eds., *Young Canada Readers: 6, Treasures in Reading* (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1965).p.151.

⁵⁶⁸ Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History*.p.128.

⁵⁶⁹ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.p.201.

⁵⁷⁰ Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55*. pp.216-250.

explains that the incorporation of ‘so-called Indian traditions’ into summer camp life was part and parcel of the broader antimodernist impulse in twentieth-century Ontario,’ reflecting ‘middle-class unease with the pace and direction of cultural change, with a world that appeared to be irrevocably industrial, decidedly urban, and increasingly secular.’⁵⁷¹ Similarities between antimodern attitudes at Ontario summer camps from the 1920s through to the late 1950s and school textbooks created during the same period are hardly coincidental. Many camp directors, administrators and staff also worked in education during the school year and were also exposed to the child-centred educational philosophy of John Dewey and the antimodern desire for a healthier simpler life away from the stresses of city life.⁵⁷² Wall reports that:

The inclusion of Indian programming was explained by [youth camp] administrators in straightforward terms: it was included for its educational value. For them, building totem poles, painting teepees and performing Indian rituals were ways to learn about, and express admiration for, the nation’s Aboriginal heritage.⁵⁷³

Indian Braves
Formation: Single circle, seated on floor facing centre, arms forward, and elbows raised shoulder high.

Measures	Part I
1-4	Bend forward and back four times.
5-8	Bend right and left alternately four times.
9-12	Raise arms up high with hands open, look up, fold arms. Repeat three times.
13-16	Look R., hand over eyes as if searching for something. Repeat L., R., L.
1-4	Listen R., with R. hand at ear, then listen L. with L. hand at ear. Repeat.
5-8	Smoke pipe four times. Pretend to hold a long pipe with bowl resting in one hand, other hand near mouth.
9-16	Repeat listening and smoking.

Part II

17	Strike floor twice, first with R. then L. hand.
18	Give Indian whoop 3 times.
19, 20	Repeat measures 17 and 18.
21-24	Jump up and move around in a circle with Indian skip.
25-32	Repeat all of Part II.

22

Indian Braves

23

Fig. 6.4 ‘Indian Braves’, Teacher’s Guide to Riding with the Sun, pp.22-23

⁵⁷¹ Ibid. p.217.

⁵⁷² Ibid. pp.9-25; 162-163.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., p.220.

Through the 1950s and 1960s, children were offered multiple opportunities to ‘play Indian’ in the modern classroom setting through the use of Indian legends in their school readers. The activities suggested in the *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun* to accompany ‘The Two Sisters,’ provide an example.⁵⁷⁴ The legend seems to be included for the purpose of ‘Learning about Indians,’ one of the suggested activities in the *Teacher's Guide*, rather than for its specific content.

Under ‘Reading and Discussion’ it is suggested that the teacher question the children about ‘the costumes worn by the people, the gifts given... music and dances.’⁵⁷⁵ The first of the ‘Related Activities’ is ‘Learning an Indian Dance.’ Music and choreography are provided (Figure 6.4). Subsequent activities include ‘Learning about Indians’ and ‘Construction... Making a totem pole, Indian canoes, tepees, etc.’ although no details are given for these craft projects.⁵⁷⁶ Other teachers’ manuals recommend a variety of projects developed from the Indian legends in the readers, the simplest of which is creating stories in imitation of the legends: ‘Have the children write a myth to account for the appearance of another animal: e.g. “how the Beaver Got a Flat Tail.”’⁵⁷⁷

‘Hiawatha’s Sailing’ is presented as a ‘dramatic reading’ with parts for nearly twenty pupils in both editions of *My World and I*. The *Teacher's Manual* provides stage directions on how the piece should be interpreted, with ‘a background of Indian music... provided by a



Figure 6.5 ‘Hiawatha’s Sailing,’ *My World and I*, 1958

record player.’⁵⁷⁸ The poem gives detailed instructions on canoe construction, as Hiawatha gathers and prepares his materials and eventually produces the first canoe.⁵⁷⁹ The 1958 edition provides a clear, almost diagrammatic depiction of canoe construction (Figure 6.5). One of the ‘follow-up’ activities suggested in the teachers’ manual is: ‘Make birch bark canoes. In urban areas where birch bark

⁵⁷⁴ Johnson’s original version appears in the Grade Six reader, *New Worlds* (1962).

⁵⁷⁵ Watson, *Teacher's Guide to Riding with the Sun*, p.21.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid. pp.22-25.

⁵⁷⁷ Alexander Turner et al., *Golden Spurs Teachers' Guide*, Canadian Basic Reading Series (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited, 1963). p.61.

⁵⁷⁸ Boyce and Norton, *Teacher's Manual for My World and I*. p.168.

⁵⁷⁹ G.H. Dobrindt, ed. *My World and I*. (Ryerson : Macmillan, 1946). pp.86-91.

cannot be obtained a satisfactory “bark” can be made by colouring wrapping paper suitably.⁵⁸⁰ Similarly, the *Teacher's Handbook for Under the North Star* suggests, ‘Design some totem-poles in an art period, using crayons or watercolours as the medium’ as a ‘follow-up activity for ‘The Legend of the Thunderbird.’⁵⁸¹ The *Teachers' Manual for Happy Highways* is more ambitious: ‘The class will be interested in carving and colouring their own models of totem poles out of balsa wood, which may be purchased in any hobby shop.’⁵⁸²

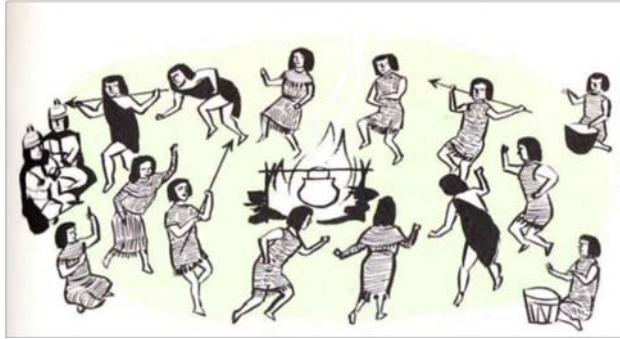


Fig. 6.6 ‘How Peace Came to the West Coast,’ Over the Bridge 1958

Studying First Nations legends provided opportunities for antimodern tribal activities—chanting, dancing, storytelling and drumming—within the modern twentieth-century classroom. Philip Deloria explains the role of song and dance in becoming Other:

‘Mimetic action reinforced a sense of difference, important when one wished to cross out of modernity... Mimesis was not simply the copying of something Other. Rather, modernist Indians imitated and appropriated the Other viscerally through the medium of their bodies.’⁵⁸³

Margaret Atwood considers that the inclusion of Aboriginal songs and verse in both school and extracurricular activities influenced children’s constructions of Canadian identity:

A great many children, over the space of fifty years, were invited to believe that they were metaphorically Indian, and to invest some of their own identity in this notion. ‘My paddle’s clean and bright,’ they sang, ‘flashing like silver’...When such children read Pauline Johnson’s ‘The Song My Paddle Sings’ in their school readers—as they did, until the 1960s—they knew that the paddle in the song was not just Pauline’s paddle but their paddle too.⁵⁸⁴

Unlike the historical accounts and stories about First Nations, where the child reader is positioned simply as an observer, the activities associated with the legends invite children to immerse themselves in a constructed notion of First Nations culture, participating in some

⁵⁸⁰ G.H. Dobrindt and Martha Brand, eds., *Teacher's Handbook for My World and I* (Ryerson Press & Macmillans in Canada, 1950), p.46.

⁵⁸¹ Miriam Norton and Eleanor Boyce, eds., *Teacher's Handbook for under the North Star* (Ryerson Press and Macmillans in Canada), p.134.

⁵⁸² *Teachers' Manual for Happy Highways*, ed. F. Henry Johnson, Teaching Canadian Children to Read (Toronto, Vancouver: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Limited, 1962), p.92.

⁵⁸³ Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1998), p.120.

⁵⁸⁴ Atwood, *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature*, p.47.

version of song, dance, craft or storytelling, thus taking on the identity of a long-vanished Other. There is no suggestion that this adoption of a pre-contact identity—all the legends are set in a time ‘before the coming of the white man’—is a deliberate attempt to deny the effects of European colonization, but it is certainly in keeping with an antimodern desire to return to a simpler time and place.

Landscape

The virtual cross-country tours which defined ‘Canada’ for schoolchildren of the 1950s are largely absent from the 1960s readers; the revised *New World Readers* is the only new series which includes units representing Canada ‘from sea to sea’. While the units ‘Canadian Sampler’ (*Argosy*), ‘In Our Land’ (*Golden Spurs*) and ‘Canadian Adventures’ (*Adventure Awaits*) all feature stories set in Canada, there is no systematic attempt to include each region in these units. The *Canadian Heritage Readers* feature units on different regions, with ‘Maritime Yarns’ and ‘Western Round-Up’ in *Under Canadian Skies*, followed by ‘Ontario Accent’ and ‘Pacific Shores’ in *Broad Horizons*. It is worth noting that with the exception of Ontario, Canada is divided into geographical regions rather than the political boundaries of the provinces and this regionalism seems to be consistent throughout the 1960s readers, with less of an effort to present Canada as a whole. Overall, stories from different parts of the country are spread throughout the readers, appearing in units with a variety of different themes.

The teachers’ manuals stress the use of maps with the selections, indeed, one of the goals seems to be to teach map reading skills, and geographical knowledge, as suggested in the teacher’s manual for *Adventures Await*: ‘Map Reading. To introduce children to the study skill of locating information on a map, first show them the classroom globe and help them find North America and Canada.’⁵⁸⁵ No maps are included in the readers and the teachers’ manuals generally suggest wall maps or ‘chalk board sketch maps’ should be used, rather than atlases.

‘Happy Birthday To Canada’ provides a brief overview of Canada from the west coast to the east, focusing on topography rather than inhabitants, with wilderness dominating over urban settings. Similarly, although ‘A Canadian Speaks’ mentions industrial and urban Canada, the selection gives more prominence to less settled areas:

Let us look at the land. What flashes through your mind when you picture Canada? Fresh, clean, northern, young, big, strong—do you think of muskeg, black lakes, sharp winters and intense summers? Do you see a spine of rock

⁵⁸⁵ Shular, *Teaching Adventure Awaits*.p.98.

across the face of Canada and towering peaks in the west? Do you see northern lights and lonely trappers' trails? Canada is a prairie patchwork and soft valleys in the Maritimes. It is fertile land humming with industry in the Great Lakes basin. It is the long village streets and smiling spires of Quebec. It is beckoning wilderness and barren plains running to the Arctic. It is forest and stream, farms and factories.⁵⁸⁶

The article continues on to inform children that wilderness is central to ideas of Canadian landscape: 'If you were asked to give a picture of Canada in a few words, what would you say? Would you tell of our cities, or the splendour of the outdoors? The outdoors would likely be chosen first, because our wealth comes from water, rock, wood and soil.'⁵⁸⁷

While the 1960s readers include no selections set in named Canadian cities—and, indeed, very few stories in specifically urban locations—there are also few contemporary stories set on family farms or directly concerned with agriculture. While each series includes at least one selection, either factual or fictional, about agriculture, the stories of children visiting their relatives on farms across Canada that were a strong feature of the 1950s readers have vanished. The 'Farms and Ranches' unit in *New Worlds* includes contemporary stories about agriculture, emphasising pride in the family farm and working together to achieve goals. 'Willie the Conqueror' illustrates not only perseverance but also the science of modern farming, a theme which also appears in 'Nan Logan, Flying Farmer' in *Happy Highways*, where the girl acts as 'spotter' for her father's aerial surveys of the farm. With these exceptions, the stories of agriculture are primarily pioneer tales, settlers clearing forests or building homes on the prairies, and, again unlike the 1950s readers, there are few suggestions that children might aspire to farming careers.

Only *Broad Horizons* includes a unit devoted specifically to the far north, 'Tales of the Tundra', but contemporary stories set in Canada's Arctic are found throughout the readers. These centre on the trading post and will be discussed later in this chapter. The wilderness landscapes of the Arctic and the Canadian Shield continue to dominate as the site of adventure, not only in historic tales of fur traders and pioneers, but also recreation. Selections based on resource extraction—the exciting tales of logging and mining so prominent in the 1950s readers—are greatly reduced in the 1960s readers. This does not reflect employment in Canada's 'primary industries' (resource extraction) which remained fairly stable, dropping

⁵⁸⁶ Dobrindt, Gathercole, and Hughes, *My World and I*, Rev Ed.p.380.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.p.380-81.

only 0.3 percent between 1946 and 1960.⁵⁸⁸ Rather it suggests an increased construction of the Canadian wilderness as a site for adventure than simply resource development.

Despite the lack of a cross-country tours from east to west, the Laurentian or Canadian Shield construction of Canada continues to dominate the readers, with no sense of a Continental perspective. This may be, in part, a reaction to perceptions of the dominance of American popular culture in Canada, a concern articulated by the Massey Commission and prevalent among Canadian librarians and educators of the 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁸⁹ While the readers include a few selections about the United States, these are largely historical, constructing the USA as a 'good neighbour' rather than a political entity or trade partner. The 'Neighbours to the South' unit in *Under Canadian Skies* includes a story about the young Abraham Lincoln, 'Four Silver Pitchers', about Mexican craftspeople, and 'S.O.S.', the story of two boys who rescue an injured neighbour by alerting the Coast Guard. No location is specified for this story which could equally have taken place in Canada. Throughout the readers, American western and pioneer stories are used, presumably when suitable Canadian material is not available; for example, the poem 'A Cowboy's Life': 'The open range land in the poem could equally well be Canadian.'⁵⁹⁰ The inclusion of pioneer stories by Laura Ingalls Wilder is similarly justified: 'Many of the situations might well have arisen on our own prairie landscape in pioneer days.'⁵⁹¹

In addition to the ubiquitous tales of pioneers making homes in the wilderness, virtually all the 1960s readers contain tales of wilderness survival, a dominant theme in Canadian national identity, particularly in literature, as identified by Margaret Atwood, among others.⁵⁹² In the readers before the 1960s, wilderness survival is largely represented by tales of British settlers clearing dense forests and making homes. Additionally, each of the 1950s series includes at least one story of lost children surviving in the wilderness. With a few exceptions, the survival stories in the readers used before 1960, are set in the distant past, the nineteenth

⁵⁸⁸ "Percentage Distribution of the Employed by Industrial Group 1946 and 1956 to 1965," Statistics Canada, http://www65.statcan.gc.ca/acyb02/1967/acyb02_19670744004-eng.htm.

⁵⁸⁹ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*, p.53.

⁵⁹⁰ *Teachers' Manual for under Canadian Skies*, ed. F. Henry Johnson, Teaching Canadian Children to Read (Toronto, Vancouver: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Limited, 1963), p.106.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.* p.107.

⁵⁹² Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature.*, *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature.*, Frye, *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination.*, Kate Turner and Bill Freedman, "Nature as a Theme in Canadian Literature," *Environmental Reviews* 13, no. 4 (2005).

century or earlier, and located in the southern parts of Canada, mainly the St Lawrence River drainage basin. As discussed in Chapter Five, the particular Canadian identity constructed by these pioneer survival stories includes a strong element of British imperial ethnicity.

In the 1960s, the site of wilderness survival shifts to the North, with the majority of the stories present-day adventures of young people in the Arctic. The survival theme is particularly strong in the *Canadian Heritage Readers: Happy Highways* and *Under Canadian Skies* each feature three wilderness survival tales and *Broad Horizons* has five tales of Arctic survival plus several others of survival in southern Canadian wilderness landscapes. Survival is a somewhat less dominant theme in the other five reading series, but each reader includes at least one story of humans triumphing over the Canadian wilderness environment.

The teachers' manuals stress the reality of the Canadian wilderness survival stories, as illustrated in the preparatory notes for 'Return at Springtime' and 'Bushed' in the *Story Caravan Teachers' Guide*:

Both selections are concerned with the problem of survival in a hostile and difficult environment. Such instances are not uncommon in the modern scene, for rarely does a winter pass in which the Canadian wilds do not present the dramatic tale of such an occurrence. Perhaps the most outstanding example of being lost and marooned in the depths of the Canadian winter occurred during February 1963, when a pilot, Ralph Flores, was forced down on a remote slope in the Canadian Yukon. His passenger, Helen Klaben, suffered a broken arm and was unable to move. For fifty-nine days the temperature hovered at 40 below zero while savage storms assaulted their frail defense. How did they survive?⁵⁹³

Stories based upon real tales of survival, for example 'Labrador Doctor', the account of Sir William Grenfell's experience adrift on an ice flow, are included, although only *Young Canada Readers: 5* features selections on the ill-fated Franklin expedition.⁵⁹⁴

Because the readers are designed for children under twelve, they include few of the gruesome deaths so characteristic of the tales that typify the Canadian survival theme for Atwood. The Canadian North portrayed in the readers is *not* malevolent, but the site of adventure, where young Canadians triumph and survive, often assisted by their faithful dogs or Aboriginal friends.

⁵⁹³ Turner et al., *Story Caravan Teachers' Guide*.p.68.

⁵⁹⁴ 'Labrador Doctor'- Clare B.; Morgan Routley, Grace, ed. *Under the North Star Rev Ed*, The New World Readers (Toronto: Macmillan: Ryerson, 1958).pp.351-357; Franklin-related selections - McKay and Code, *Young Canada Readers: 5*.pp.301-15.

Inhabitants

Rather than the 'typical young Canadians' encountered on the cross-country journeys of the 1950s readers, the young people in the 1960s readers are individuals, preoccupied with their personal dilemmas. The readers reflect a distinct theme of 'growing up', with units including 'As I Was Growing', 'A Time to be Growing' and 'Growing Up'. These units do not focus on future careers but on present-day children's moral and ethical problems. The 'coming of age' stories involve heroics and courage in the face of danger, especially in the tales of wilderness survival. The more sophisticated portrayal of Canadian children within the 1960s readers reflects the increased support for and interest in indigenous Canadian children's literature, as described by Edwards and Saltman.⁵⁹⁵

Many of the stereotypes encountered in the 1950s readers persist, with British settlers clearly constructed as our 'ancestors' both within the readers and the accompanying teachers' manuals: 'They can realize the courage displayed by our forefathers. They can take pride in the work of their pioneering ancestors. The underlying thought is the contrast with our own times, and respect for the early settlers.'⁵⁹⁶ French settlers continue to occupy the sugar bush, with little contemporary presence. The 'Habitant Memories' are, in the main, amusing tall tales, often told using French words or broken English.

Some of the stories of immigrant children integrating into Canadian society remain, but overall the 1960s readers include fewer stories of New Canadians. Of the four selections in the 'New Canadians' unit in *Broad Horizons*, two are tales of nineteenth century (or earlier) British settlers, while in 'The Wrestler and the Cat' the fact that the family are recent immigrants, possibly from Czechoslovakia, is not relevant to the plot, nor does the story have a distinctly Canadian setting. The fourth selection is the well-worn 'Canada's Child' which also reappears in the revised *Under the North Star*. The *New World Readers* retain 'Czechs to Canadians' and the extract from 'The Bells on Finland Street' which also appears in *Beyond the Horizon*. *Under Canadian Skies* includes 'A Song in the Mountains' an immigrant opera singer who encourages a First Nations youth in his dreams of becoming an artist.

⁵⁹⁵ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.pp.51-68.

⁵⁹⁶ Margaret A Robinson and B Dick, *Teacher's Manual for over the Bridge*, The New World Readers (Toronto: The Ryerson Press and The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1960).p.98.

Golden Spurs is the only reader to include children of African heritage living in Canada, through both the illustrations for the introductory poem, ‘Mother To Son’, and ‘Willie’s Good Recess’, the story of a child who ‘left the nice warm climate of Georgia only three weeks ago’.⁵⁹⁷ The fact that Willie and the nameless characters in the poem are of African descent is referenced only through the illustrations, not the text. Willie is lonely, not because he is the only person of colour in what appears to be a sea of white faces, but because he is new to the school and does not know how to play popular games at recess. Through singing ‘a lovely old spiritual’ while accompanying himself on the drum, Willie gains the admiration of his classmates and is integrated into the group. Another New Canadian, the proponent of ‘Mario’s Morning Talk’, overcomes his shyness to talk to his class about his native Italy:

“I will end my talk by saying that I am glad to be in Canada. It is my home now. My father says that we have not come to Canada just to share in the freedom and prosperity that you have, but to share with you the precious things that we bring with us from the past and from so many miles away.”⁵⁹⁸

The patriotic poem, ‘There’s a Thing We Love to Think Of’ serves as the closing selection in the revised edition of *My World and I*. The teacher’s manual summarizes the textbook’s role in constructing Canadian national identity:

For a textbook entitled *My World and I*, a poem such as “There’s a Thing We Love to Think Of” is a fitting conclusion. The newcomer will be proud of being a Canadian now, and will readily see that the native born Canadian is justly proud of Canada. All children will be able to list some of the things that they love about our country, as the author does in verses one and two. She is of Anglo-Saxon parentage, as shown in verses three and four. It is only recently that Canadians have become aware of the heritage of the European and Asiatic immigrant. We know that the new-Canadian can be proud of his mother land and also of his new home.⁵⁹⁹

Within the 1960s readers, the trope of the Vanishing Indian persists, but unlike the earlier readers, First Nations are represented in contemporary stories of Canada, albeit restricted to the North. In the next section, *The Trading Post*, I explore the presentation of twentieth century Aboriginal peoples and their interactions with English Canadians in the Canadian wilderness landscape.

⁵⁹⁷ Alexander Turner, Margaret Brown, and E. Benton Misener, eds., *Golden Spurs*, Canadian Basic Readers (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1962).p.80.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.p.88.

⁵⁹⁹ Boyce and Norton, *Teacher’s Manual for My World and I*.p.189.



Fig. 6.7 'Young Snooky' Broad Horizons

The Trading Post

In this section I examine an element that represents Canadian identity as constructed throughout the readers: the trading post. For most twentieth-century Canadians, the trading post was an entirely imagined place; few would ever have the opportunity to visit one and it was not central to their lives. And yet, throughout the readers, especially those of the

1960s, the trading post is not an element of the distant past but the setting for a surprising number of present-day stories.

The trading post selections encapsulate all the elements that construct Canadian identity within the readers—the landscape, the inhabitants and the myths and symbols. They also incorporate the dominant metanarratives of Canadian identity: the wilderness and multiculturalism. The wilderness setting is a given, while the trading post represents multiculturalism in the sense that it is the site for interaction between the Europeans—English and French---and the Aboriginal peoples—Inuit, First Nations and Métis. The trading post also offered a direct link to Britain, a constant reminder of British imperial ethnicity.

Originally trading posts served as modern symbols of commerce, law-and-order and British imperialism, representing the introduction of European commerce in North America and development of modern communication and trade routes. For urban twentieth century children, the trading post is positioned as a distant site of romantic adventures, the entry to the wilderness and the source of supplies and equipment one would need when embarking on a wilderness adventure. For both historical explorers and contemporary adventurers, the trading post is constructed as a gateway: the entrance to the Canadian wilderness and the point of return to civilization. Historian W. L. Morton observes that the 'alternate penetration of the wilderness and return to civilization... forms the basic elements of Canadian character.'⁶⁰⁰

⁶⁰⁰ Morton, *The Canadian Identity.*, pp.4-5.

In the *Ontario Readers* used from 1909 to 1936, the trading post was literally a ‘garrison’, the fort defended by Madeleine de Verchères, Jacques Cartier’s winter quarters. We see the young Radisson leaving the safety of the post only to be kidnapped by the Iroquois. These early ‘posts’ or ‘forts’ represent not only European colonization, but also points of safety, of civilization, in the North American wilderness. The Hudson’s Bay Company fort at the mouth of the Nelson River is described as surrounded by a ‘high palisade.’⁶⁰¹ Arthur Heming, author of ‘Bargaining with the Factor,’ explains the need for this fortification:

In the old days, in certain parts of the country, where Indians came to the posts to get their “advances” or to barter their winter’s catch of fur, the traders had to exercise constant caution to prevent them from looting the establishments. At some posts only a few Indians at a time were allowed within the fort, and even then trading was conducted through a wicket. Nowadays the Indians in any locality rarely cause trouble and at the trading post the business of the Indian shops is conducted in a quiet and orderly way.⁶⁰²

Twentieth century trading posts are not described as fortified and the trading posts in ‘Nehemiah Teaboy’ and ‘Danny Whiteduck’s Reward’ are specifically located on Indian reserves. As the trading posts were the central gathering points for both Aboriginal people and Europeans in the Canadian wilderness, it was convenient for churches to establish missions and schools adjacent to the posts. RCMP outposts were also established near the trading posts. ‘All in the Day’s Work’ is an adventure story narrated by an RCMP officer stationed at Port Burwell; the tiny community consists of nothing more than the RCMP base, an Inuit winter settlement and the Hudson’s Bay Post.⁶⁰³

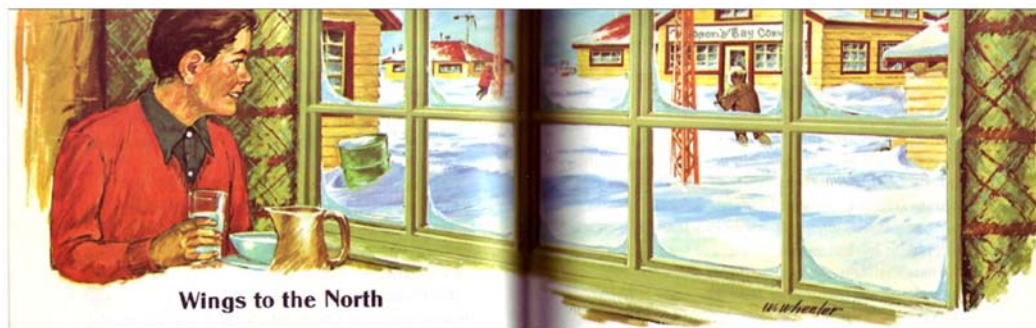


Fig. 6.9 ‘Wings to the North’ Adventure Awaits

⁶⁰¹ F. Henry Johnson, ed. *Under Canadian Skies*, Canadian Heritage Readers (Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1962), p.100.

⁶⁰² Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*. pp.261-262.

⁶⁰³ Biehl, *All Sails Set*. pp.225-233.

A typical twentieth-century northern settlement is described in ‘Wings to the North:’ ‘Out of the window, Alec could see the store and the radio tower and the place for storing things. Beyond that group of buildings was the Mounted Police Post’ (Figure 6.9).⁶⁰⁴ It should be noted that the trading post is a gendered space, a male preserve. English Canadian women such as Alec’s mother may teach school at the settlement but do not work at the post, while Aboriginal women are shown trading for goods but are also not employed in trading.

Some stories show Aboriginal people settling, at least seasonally, near the trading post, but more typically trappers and hunters visit only to trade, as shown in ‘A Surprise for Sala’:

The trading post was a long distance away and so Idlout only made one winter trip. This came at the end of the fox season and he would take with him a sled load of furs. This was a most exciting journey.⁶⁰⁵

The distance from the trading post nearly leads to starvation in ‘Ootook Saves Her Family;’ the family is too weak to travel for desperately needed supplies and is only saved by the arrival of relatives.⁶⁰⁶ Remoteness and isolation from the trading post serves as a plot device in numerous stories, when children are left on their own in the wilderness for several days while adults travel for supplies. During these absences, the children show courage when besieged by bears or wolves or demonstrate their survival skills. The young narrator of ‘Merwa’ was left alone when his father made his annual trip to trade his furs: ‘It was during one of these trips... that I had my greatest adventure.’⁶⁰⁷

Historically, the person in charge of the largest forts was known as the ‘Governor,’ while the person responsible for trading was the ‘factor,’ chief trader or, in more modern stories, the post manager. The factor is described as ‘a commander, a fur merchant and a father to the Indian—all in one...’⁶⁰⁸ In the absence of any other form of law and order, Hudson’s Bay factors often assumed that responsibility, becoming the authority in the district.

The factor had often worked his way up through the company, possibly inspired by the rags-to-riches story of Henry Kelsey, the London street urchin who rose through the ranks of the Hudson’s Bay Company. The rebellious Kelsey, who, strictly against orders, engaged

⁶⁰⁴ W. John McIntosh and Jessie Shular, eds., *Adventure Awaits* (Toronto: Ginn, 1961). p.12.

⁶⁰⁵ Turner, Brown, and Misener, *Golden Spurs*. p.93.

⁶⁰⁶ McKay and Code, *Young Canada Readers: 5*. pp.137-147.

⁶⁰⁷ Johnson, *Happy Highways*., p.160.

⁶⁰⁸ Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*., p.261.

in ‘barefaced chumminess with the redskins,’ nonetheless ‘brought profit to the Company... [and] claimed for the Hudson’s Bay Company the new land he discovered,’ was eventually appointed Governor.⁶⁰⁹ Despite humble origins, even the newest Hudson’s Bay Company clerk is positioned as the social and intellectual superior of the French and Aboriginal hunters, trappers and voyageurs, as the factor points when describing the duties of a Company employee to apprentice Muir McEwan:

“Ye *do* keep your eyes open! Ye’ll make a smart clerk, a keen trader some day.”

“Please, sir, I’d rather be a voyageur wi’ Louis.”

“I ken that,” replied the factor. “But there are still rivers tae be explored, new trading posts for you as a Company officer to locate, while Long Louis must be here every summer tae run the boats through yon rapids.”⁶¹⁰

Scots dialect is used throughout the readers to distinguish the traders. The mercy flight in ‘Bush Pilot’ is met by a typical factor:

Day was nearly done when the Doctor and Tim slid to a stop on the cleared grounds at the Hudson’s Bay trading post at Porcupine River... “Welcome. We’ve been waiting for you,” Archie Duncan, the Post manager, exclaimed in pleasant Scots accents.⁶¹¹

The Scots accent is perhaps less easy to understand in ‘Bargaining with the Factor.’ Chief Oo-koo-hoo explains that he will be hunting in a new area where game will be plentiful:

“Therefore I want you to give me liberal advances, so that my hunt will not be hindered.” The factor replies:

“Fegs, Oo-koo-hoo, yon’s an auld, auld farrant. But ye’re well-kenned for a leal, honest man; and sae, I’se no be unco haird upon ye.”⁶¹²

In the readers it is common for Aboriginal people to speak broken English, indeed, this is part of their Otherness. Unusually in this selection, Chief Oo-koo-hoo is presented as speaking impeccable formal English, while the factor’s Scots dialect is barely comprehensible. No helpful explanatory notes are provided in the teacher’s *Treasury Manual*.⁶¹³

The factor and Chief Oo-koo-hoo treat each other with great courtesy and it is only at the end of the account that tension is revealed: ‘After a good deal of haggling... Oo-koo-hoo’s

⁶⁰⁹ Johnson, *Under Canadian Skies*, p.102.

⁶¹⁰ Turner, Brown, and Misener, *Argosy*. p.67.

⁶¹¹ Barrett, *Wide Open Windows*. p.277.

⁶¹² Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*, p.264.

⁶¹³ C.D. Wootton, B.C. Diltz, and C. Bremner, eds., *The Treasury Manual - Grades Iv - Vi*bid. (Ryerson Press and Macmillans in Canada, 1932). p.48.

manifest contentment somewhat relieved the trader's anxiety.⁶¹⁴ In all cases, there is mutual respect between the trader and the Aboriginal trapper. However, as Heming indicates, the trader has the power: the Indian is 'never a match for the civilized white man.'⁶¹⁵ While the value of the trade goods may be long-established—that is, a kettle is worth a given number of 'points,'—the value of the furs—the number of 'points' a pelt is worth—is set seasonally and the trapper arrives at the post not knowing how much he will receive for his winter's work.

At the trading post, the factor's valuation of furs is never questioned and the trapper or hunter, Aboriginal or white, is entirely at the trader's mercy. 'A Surprise for Sala' illustrates the factor's knowledge of value for goods beyond furs, when he notices Sala playing with a gift from his grandfather, an ivory carving which the family considers 'a useless toy,' and offers to buy it:

Then the trader named a sum of money, and Idlout's mouth fell open. So did the mouths of all the people... After a few minutes his father explained to him that if he gave the trader his ivory partridges, there would then be enough tokens for the small rifle.⁶¹⁶

There is no discussion in the reader as to whether Sala received a fair price for his carving; the assumption is that the trader is honest.

In present-day stories, the trading post is not only the centre of commerce but serves as the distribution point for Canadian government services. 'Ootook Saves Her Family' appears in *Young Canada Reader 5*. Described in the lengthy introduction as 'true-to-life fiction,' the story is an extract from *Ootook: Young Eskimo Girl* by well-known Canadian children's author Lynn Harrington.⁶¹⁷ Ootook lives with her grandfather in 'a little white Company house' provided because he worked for the Hudson's Bay Company post. Ootook sets off to find her birth family and discovers them living in squalor and near starvation; her father does not understand that he can use their 'Family Allowance at the trading-post... his credit will have grown to a large amount.'⁶¹⁸

The trading post is shown as the site of commercial exchange, where manufactured artifacts of 'civilization' are taken into the wilderness and products of the wilderness (furs,

⁶¹⁴ Lorne Pierce, ed. *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*ibid. (Ryerson Macmillan, 1936). p.266.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid. p.262.

⁶¹⁶ Turner, Brown, and Misener, *Golden Spurs*. p.100.

⁶¹⁷ McKay and Code, *Young Canada Readers: 5*. pp.137-147.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.p.140.

carvings) are sent out to 'civilization.' As noted earlier, only the factor knows the value of the goods. At the trading posts, pelts are traded by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal hunters and trappers for goods or credit. 'Bargaining with the Factor' gives a vivid picture of the interior of the trading room and the goods therein by Arthur Heming, a well-known Canadian artist and writer who 'specialised in outdoor scenes of the north.'⁶¹⁹

When I entered the trading room I saw it was furnished with a U-shaped counter paralleling three sides of the room, and with a large box stove in the middle of the intervening space. On the shelves and racks upon the walls and from hooks in the rafters rested or hung a conglomeration of goods to be offered in trade to the natives. There were copper pails and calico dresses, pain-killer bottles and Hudson's Bay blankets, frying pans and ladies' wire bustles, axes and ribbons, shirts and hunting knives, perfumes and bear traps. In a way, the Indian shop resembled a department store, except that all departments were jumbled together.⁶²⁰

Similar detailed descriptions of trade goods are given in 'A Caribou Hunt,' 'A Surprise for Sala,' and 'Nehemiah Teaboy, Trapper,' while almost two full pages of text are devoted to a description of goods and their relative values in 'Many Happy Returns.'⁶²¹ Heming also explains the value of pelts: 'A "skin," or, as it is often called, a "made beaver," is equivalent to one dollar in the Hudson Bay and Mackenzie River districts, but only fifty cents in the region of the Athabasca.'⁶²²

The stories illustrate the Aboriginal people's increasing reliance upon manufactured goods and foods. 'The Canadian Eskimo' describes the adaptation to European technologies: 'Today many Eskimos use steel runners bought from white traders.'⁶²³ 'Danny Whiteduck's Reward' is the story of a ten-year-old boy who covets a canoe he has seen in the trading post. There is no suggestion that Danny (or his friends or family) might build a canoe, and the teacher's manual does not suggest that there is anything unnatural in the 'council of braves' awarding Danny a manufactured version of the traditional watercraft of his people, acquired from the trading post.⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁹ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*. pp.29-30.

⁶²⁰ Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five.*, p.262-63.

⁶²¹ Johnson, *Under Canadian Skies.*, pp.96-98.

⁶²² Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five.*, p.265.

⁶²³ Barrett, *Wide Open Windows.*, pp.285.

⁶²⁴ Robinson and Tomey, *Over the Bridge*. pp.370-79.

The reliance of the Aboriginal people upon goods supplied by the trading post is emphasised in 'A Caribou Hunt.' Chaska helps the post manager open cases of goods and stock the shelves:

He loved the feel and the smell of the goods; raisins and spices, bolts of calicoes and prints, and smooth bandana handkerchiefs, tea, and tobacco, and traps—*everything that his people would need.*⁶²⁵

Similarly, in 'A Surprise for Sala,' priorities are listed:

Slowly Sala's father collected a large pile of food, clothing and other things which were needed the most—matches, molasses, big bars of soap, round balls of twine for the fish net, and a large piece of canvas to repair the summer tent.⁶²⁶

In both examples, the goods are described not as luxuries but as necessities for the families to exist—the word 'need' occurs in each example. In 'Many Happy Returns' goods considered necessities, including gunpowder, hatchets, hunting knives, and kettles are shown as costing far fewer 'skins' than 'luxuries' such as a looking glass and comb, beads or a lace-trimmed coat.⁶²⁷ Children's natural desires for the goods displayed at the trading post cause family conflict in both 'Danny Whiteduck's Reward' and 'A Surprise for Sala.'

In the readers, the trading post is shown as one of the few locations of interaction between Aboriginal people and Europeans, effectively the site of the European's introduction to Aboriginal people and also to the Canadian wilderness. Explorers are shown departing from trading posts on their voyages of discovery:

Many years ago, in a fur trading post on the banks of the Peace River... Alexander Mackenzie was preparing to make his first crossing to the Pacific Ocean. His big twenty-five-foot birch-bark canoe was being carefully loaded for the trip.⁶²⁸

The story of 'Cap Shott' conveys a sense of the excitement felt by Muir McEwan, an apprentice clerk of the Hudson's Bay Company, heading out into the Canadian wilderness for the first time:

Yesterday... he had arrived here at the height of land between the Atlantic and Arctic watersheds. Today... The trade goods—and Muir—were headed on toward the Athabaska with the *hommes du Nord*.⁶²⁹

⁶²⁵ Barrett, *Wide Open Windows*. p.251. Italics mine.

⁶²⁶ Turner, Brown, and Misener, *Golden Spurs.*, p.97.

⁶²⁷ Johnson, *Under Canadian Skies.*, pp.96-98.

⁶²⁸ *Broad Horizons*, Canadian Heritage Readers (Toronto: J.M.Dent, 1963).p.127.

⁶²⁹ Turner, Brown, and Misener, *Argosy*.pp.57.

The trading post was also a sign of civilization in the wilderness: ‘Against a thrusting wind and stinging rain on the ninety-mile Athabaska Lake, they paddled along its wave-pounded shore to the defiantly set log buildings of Fort Chipewyan.’⁶³⁰ Seen from a bush plane, the trading post is less imposing: ‘How small the Post looked! Just a tiny group of wooden buildings on the great frozen plain.’⁶³¹

In stories set in the distant past, for example, ‘Many Happy Returns,’ the story of explorer Henry Kelsey, fraternization between the Aboriginal people and European employees of the Company is prohibited: ‘Though there was time off to shoot partridge for the table, none of the people in the Fort was allowed to make friends with the Indians they met. This rule was very strict.’⁶³² In modern stories there do not appear to be any such restrictions. Frequently the central character’s father is the chief trader or manager at the post. This gives the English Canadian child a reason to be in the North and presents a view of the Canadian wilderness from an ‘outsider’ perspective. Some stories depict friendships between trading post children and the Aboriginal community but in most cases the trading post children seem socially isolated, although they seem to have no difficulty in acquiring traditional skills, such as hunting and driving a dog team.

Bobby, the central character in ‘Young Snooky,’ seems very solitary—there are no references to other children—and spends most of his time training his sled dog.⁶³³ His aspiration is to be a dog team driver, collecting furs from remote outposts. Similarly, despite living for two years in ‘the Arctic,’ thirteen-year-old Mark McRoy, protagonist of ‘The Caribou Hunt,’ does not seem to be integrated into the community; his father runs the trading post and his mother teaches in a ‘frame schoolhouse,’ while his friends live in ‘sod Eskimo houses.’ He has one ‘really close friend among the Eskimo boys’ although Oka ‘sometimes seemed to look upon Mark with suspicion’—as do the sled dogs.⁶³⁴ ‘Wings to the North’ is probably the only story of an entirely equal relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in the readers. Alec’s father is manager of the post; his friend Nanook’s father is a hunter: ‘Nanook was an Eskimo boy and Alec’s best friend.’⁶³⁵ However, the story

⁶³⁰ Ibid. p.63.

⁶³¹ McIntosh and Shular, *Adventure Awaits.*, p.128.

⁶³² Johnson, *Under Canadian Skies.*p.99.

⁶³³ Dickie, *Gay Adventurers.* pp.26-32, also McIntosh and Orchard, *Beyond the Horizon.* pp.52-61.

⁶³⁴ W. John McIntosh and Muriel A. Affleck, eds., *New Worlds* (Toronto: Ginn, 1962). p.353.

⁶³⁵ McIntosh and Shular, *Adventure Awaits.* p.121.

is entirely lacking in conflict and tension and is probably a little dull when compared to other Arctic tales.

The trading posts and surrounding settlements are the bases, homes or workplaces of the two characters positioned most frequently in the readers as role models in the Canadian wilderness: the Mountie and the bush pilot. The bush pilot is by far the more romantic—but also more modern—of the two. While the Mountie is positioned throughout the readers as a symbol of law and order, the bush pilot is the hero of the Canadian wilderness. The Mountie obeys orders, while the pilot is frequently depicted as an independent free spirit. Within the readers, the pilot and the Mountie are exclusively unmarried white males, with names that suggest British ancestry, like the chief traders and post managers. However, the trader is positioned as a symbol of stability, frequently married with (exclusively male) offspring. He is respected, but hardly an exciting role model. While fur traders and fire rangers come and go seasonally, and Mounties and bush pilots may be reassigned, there is no suggestion that a trader might move to another post.

Conversely, the bush pilot is universally portrayed as a glamorous character. His skill with technology positions him as a modern man of the future, yet he is also shown as having traditional bushcraft skills and can repair a broken pontoon with some birch bark and sinews. The pilot supersedes the earlier fascinating figures of the wilderness, the *coureurs de bois* and *voyageurs*. Rather than the toil of toting heavy loads over endless portages, the pilot flies across the uncharted north, competently landing his craft on ice or water, undefeated by blizzards or equipment failure, combining modern technical skills with romance and danger. While a few pilots are clearly associated with commercial enterprises, including the Hudson's Bay Company and resource developers, most pilots are shown on mercy flights, flying doctors and supplies in to remote communities. On several occasions they invite children to 'hitch a ride.'

'Bush-Pilot' is a typical story of this northern hero.⁶³⁶ Tim must fly Dr. Philips from a 'little Northern Ontario village' to a remote 'Indian village at Porcupine River, hundreds



Fig.6.10 'Bush Pilot', Wide Open Windows

⁶³⁶ Barrett, *Wide Open Windows*. pp.269-78.

of miles ahead' where an epidemic is raging. It is Tim's 'first bush-flight' and he discusses his responsibilities with the doctor:

"In bush-flying, everything depends on the one man," Tim went on. "It's not like having a full crew of men. I'd hate to fail when so many lives depend on me."

"Bush pilots don't often fail. They have certainly built up a great reputation for overcoming all sorts of difficulties," agreed the Doctor. "They find a way where there seems to be none."⁶³⁷

Tim shows his inexperience when he flies into a blizzard:

Within five minutes, snow was swirling around the plane, making it impossible to see far ahead. The young pilot's face was tense. This was different from flying on a charted course. Here you were on your own, and you had to make up your mind swiftly.⁶³⁸

He decides to land on a frozen lake, running the plane onto rocks and damaging the pontoons. The doctor is injured and Tim renders first aid: 'He soon had the bleeding stopped, and a bandage in place' and starts a fire, then, using only an axe, constructs new skis for the plane.

Tim could smile again. His repair job had been successful. Most important, he had proved to himself that he could carry on the bush-pilot's reputation for being resourceful. He hadn't let them down, nor the Doctor.⁶³⁹

The story concludes with their safe arrival at the Hudson's Bay trading post at Porcupine River, where they are welcomed by the manager. Tim is obviously competent with technology but shares the same resourcefulness and bushcraft of the earlier explorers. The pilot is a rugged individual, most unlike the team players depicted in the resource extraction stories.

In summary, the trading post serves as the interface between civilization and the Canadian wilderness, encapsulating the metanarratives of Canadian national identity, as neatly summarized by Canadian geographer Brian Osborne: 'the spirit of the land; the cult of the hero; the transformation of wilderness into home and commodity; an ethic of progress; the nurturing of democracy and social justice.'⁶⁴⁰ A symbol of British imperialism, the trading post represents early European commercial activity in the New World, and the opening of the land for exploration and development. The twentieth century trading post is presented as evolving into the site of economic development, government services, communication and transportation within—or on the fringes of—the wilderness, and yet, even in the mid-twentieth

⁶³⁷ Ibid. p.270.

⁶³⁸ Ibid. p.271.

⁶³⁹ Ibid. p.277.

⁶⁴⁰ Osborne, "Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in Its Place."

century it is imbued with romance as the source of supplies and site of departure for voyages into the unknown. Instead of canoe brigades, float planes transport goods and people into and out of the wilderness and the trading post is the base for these expeditions.

Within the readers, the trading post is positioned as the place where Aboriginal people and Europeans, past and present, can meet and form relationships. The post serves as the stage for a cast full of colourful characters, Canadian heroes: the *voyageurs*, traders and explorers, Mounties, surveyors and bush pilots. The readers provide intricate descriptions of the trade goods housed at the post, and supply all the equipment needed when setting out into the unknown on a wilderness adventure. Possibly one of the trading post's most important roles within the readers is to provide a home for the youthful adventurers of the stories, if not deep in the Canadian wilderness, at least at the entrance, where they can observe—and participate—in the seasonal rhythms of Canadian wilderness life.

In the 1960s readers, when notions of British imperial ethnicity have largely been replaced by adapted Aboriginal myths and culture, the trading post serves as a strong tie to Britain, a reminder of the colonial past. John Darwin writes of British immigrants: 'instinctively drew on the huge ready-made inventory of social and cultural practices that Britain could offer to achieve the 'instant' modernity that 'progress' demanded.'⁶⁴¹ The cultural construct of the British as 'a nation of shopkeepers' is expanded into the North American trading post; all the trading posts factors and managers are depicted as being British.⁶⁴² The trading post is a site where Britons are improved by their struggles in the hostile environment and are given a chance to prove themselves in the new land, as described by McGennissen in 'Huts in the Wilderness'.⁶⁴³ Interestingly, at least in her article, the Australian readers do not seem to offer any direct equivalent to the trading post, suggesting it is a particularly Canadian representation of the British imperial ethnicity.

⁶⁴¹ Darwin, "Empire and Ethnicity."p.396.

⁶⁴² Attributed to Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 1776; also in a derogatory sense, Napoleon Bonaparte.

⁶⁴³ McGennissen, "Huts in the Wilderness: Pioneering in School Readers."

Summary

Within the 1960s readers, overt ties to Britain are all but eliminated through the adoption of Aboriginal mythology to replace the British legends of earlier readers. However, British imperial ethnicity persists both through the maintenance of the common British settler ancestor and the dominance of the trading post, a symbol of British imperialism in the wilderness.

The site of wilderness adventure shifts from the St Lawrence drainage basin and Canadian Shield to the Arctic, as depicted in the trading post stories and related tales of Arctic survival. Present-day First Nations and Inuit are shown interacting with English Canadians, albeit only in remote wilderness locations. Despite an obvious interest in modern space travel, the tone of the readers remains distinctly antimodern, with wilderness settings favoured over tales of urban life.

In comparison with the 1950s readers, there is less of an attempt to imagine Canada as a nation, with a greater emphasis on individual regions, correspondingly fewer stories of children meeting their fellow Canadians across the country and more tales of individual youth maturing—coming-of-age—in the Canadian wilderness. This accords with the greater emphasis in the teachers' manuals on individual work rather than class projects.

Chapter Seven - Conclusion

In this chapter I detail the factors leading to the abandonment of the school readers and the end of the imaged community they created. I then examine each of the three main themes: symbols and myths, landscape, and inhabitants, which formed the framework for presenting and analysing the data in this project, followed by an appreciation of antimodernism within the readers. Finally I review the contribution this thesis makes to scholarship on national identity.

The 'Living and Learning Report' and the end of school readers

Throughout the twentieth century, Ontario public school education increasingly moved from the nineteenth century system of rote learning to a more child-centred approach, with less formal teaching methods. In Ontario, progressive education was particularly marked by the introduction of the *Programme of Studies* in the 1930s, followed by the 'Porter Plan' of 1949. Each educational reform resulted in a new series of school readers, the subject of Chapters Three to Six.

The final significant milestone in Ontario public school education during the subject years of this thesis is the *Living and Learning Report* of 1968.⁶⁴⁴ Robert Stamp details the success of Conservative governments from 1943, observing that 'In the years between 1945 and 1960, Ontario proved to be a sober and conventional community which retained established customs.'⁶⁴⁵ Major influences on education within the province included continuing immigration, increasing urbanization and the 'baby boom' which took place in Canada between 1946 and 1966. Stamp places the responsibility for the movement towards educational reform in Ontario with the sudden influx of federal funding through the federal government's *Technical and Vocation Training Assistance Act* of 1960, which led to considerable upgrading of the facilities in the province's secondary schools and a reorganized *Programme of Studies* for the high schools. Education Minister William Davis then established a committee to examine the Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario. The committee was created by Order-in-Council in June, 1965, delivering its final report, *Living and Learning: The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education*

⁶⁴⁴ Ontario, "Living and Learning : The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario."

⁶⁴⁵ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*.p.202. Stamp's study ends in 1976, but the provincial Progressive Conservative party remained in power through to 1985.

in the Schools of Ontario, in 1968. Stamp refers to the report as ‘the most radical and bold document ever to originate from the bureaucratic labyrinth of the provincial department of education’ with ‘nothing but condemnation for traditional approaches to education.’⁶⁴⁶

The report, commonly referred to as the *Hall-Dennis Report* after the committee chairs, Mr. Justice E. M. Hall and Mr. L. A. Dennis, embraced child-centred learning with a strong emphasis on equipping children for their future roles in Canadian society:

Curriculum should no longer emphasize traditional values and ensure social stability, but should prepare youngsters to cope with the accelerated rate of social change expected in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first centuries.⁶⁴⁷

Stamp notes that the press reaction to *Living and Learning* was overwhelmingly favourable:

Within four months of publication, the report had sold 60,000 copies and had established itself as a national best-seller. It became the most fashionable coffee table decoration in the land—partly because it was too big to fit easily on a bookshelf, and also because it was a lavish book, full of photographs of smiling children. It was widely read because it was easy to read, a popular statement that spoke the layman’s language.⁶⁴⁸

While earlier movements toward child-based learning had been diluted over time, Education Minister William Davis endorsed the report and continued to support its aims throughout his time in office as Premier from 1971 to 1985. As a result of *Living and Learning*, the structured readers in use in Ontario since the mid-1800s were replaced during the 1970s with less formal materials.

The 1970 edition of *Circular 14* states that:

There is a need to recognize the trend away from the use of a single text per grade as the principal instrument of instruction, and towards the use of a number of books in any subject area... Teachers must be provided with an ever-increasing selection of books and instructional materials from which to choose those that meet the differing needs and aptitudes of the pupils.⁶⁴⁹

In 1948, teachers were limited to a single reading book for each grade; by 1971 over one hundred titles were approved for ‘language arts’ for the same grades.⁶⁵⁰ These include a few traditional spelling books and readers but the series are described as teaching ‘language arts’,

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid. p.217.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid. p.217.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid. p.219.

⁶⁴⁹ Ontario, "Circular 14," ed. Ontario Department of Education (1970). p.15.

⁶⁵⁰ "Circular 14," ed. Ministry of Education (1978). pp.30-35.

‘reading strategies’ and ‘language patterns,’ indicating a very different approach. While reading series persisted for the Primary pupils, individual booklets of short stories and factual materials were popular for the Junior Grades, in keeping with the 1970 *Circular 14* statement that, ‘The “learning through discovery” theory now widely held can best be implemented if pupils have regular access to a number of books.’⁶⁵¹

Somewhat belatedly, publisher Thomas Nelson produced the *Language Development Reading Series* of eight anthologies; the first of these, *Driftwood and Dandelions*, appears in *Circular 14*, 1971.⁶⁵² Unlike their dense predecessors, these readers are paperbacks of 160 to 200 pages. The books are extensively illustrated in a variety of styles including photographs, and the content appears to be entirely Canadian. Presumably the books are graded for difficulty, but that is not immediately obvious from the contents. The contents are arranged thematically with titles including *Toboggans and Turtlenecks*, *Hockey Cards and Hopscotch* and *Northern Lights and Fireflies*. It is not possible to determine which schools—or school classes—used these readers.

While the reading series introduced in the 1960s continued to be approved through the 1970s—the *Canadian Ginn Basic Readers* endured until 1979—there is no evidence that these readers were the primary means of language instruction in the modern classroom. The *Living and Learning* suggestion that children learn through a variety of media led to the Ministry of Education’s creation of the Ontario Educational Communications Authority in 1970. The organization, which quickly evolved into TVOntario (TVO), was responsible for educational television, providing materials for both classroom and home use. Thus the imagined community established through the school readers from 1909 to 1970 was replaced, at least to a certain extent, by educational television broadcasts; as these were not mandatory, it would be difficult to determine how many children viewed these broadcasts.

With the fragmentation of the school ‘language arts’ programmes following the *Living and Learning Report*, the commonality of the earlier reading programmes disappeared. During the pre-War years, Ontario public school children in Grades Four to Six read precisely the same stories, usually at the same time of year. From 1950 to 1970, schools could select from a limited choice of reading series. These readers contained many of the same selections and the books were very similar in form, content and philosophy. A Grade Five child moving to a

⁶⁵¹ "Circular 14."p.15.

⁶⁵² "Circular 14," ed. Ontario Department of Education (1971).

different school district, even to a different province, would have no difficulty recognising and using the class reader, although it might be produced by a different publisher to the one used previously.

In 1968, six very similar reading series were available for use in Grade Four to Six. Textbooks were usually selected by the school board's curriculum committee with consideration of both content and budget; in practical terms an individual teacher might be offered a choice between two—maybe three—readers for classroom use. In 1971 she could select from over four pages of approved materials including multimedia, literally *hundreds* of items all designed to support 'language arts' in the Grades Four to Six.⁶⁵³ Again, it is impossible to know which materials were used, as different teaching and learning styles were encouraged and while some readers were retained through to 1979, it is unlikely that they were read by classes as a group.

Effectively *Living and Learning* signified the end of the 'imagined community' created by the uniformity of the earlier readers, and the rituals associated with group reading in the classroom. Children across Ontario—and across Canada—no longer used the same textbooks or followed the same pattern over the school year as their counterparts located hundreds of miles away. The virtual community—both the community of children participating in the daily ritual of synchronous reading of the same materials in the classroom *and* the nation imagined through the common version of Canadian identity constructed in the readers—were both abandoned, replaced by individual learning strategies. Here I will leave the question of how the new materials constructed Canadian national identity in the late twentieth century for another researcher.

I now discuss changes in constructions of Canadian national identity under the categories used in each chapter: Symbols and Myths, Landscape and Inhabitants, followed by an examination of Antimodernism in the readers, concluding with my contribution to scholarship on national identity.

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

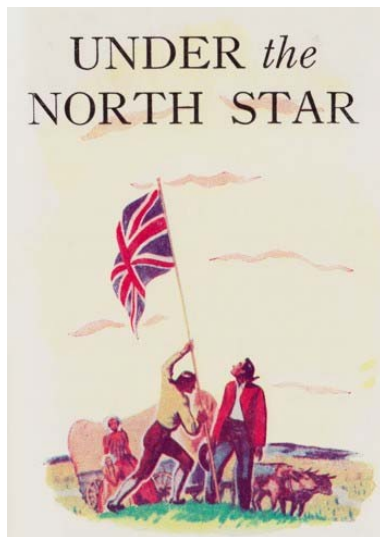


Fig. 7.1 Frontispiece for *Under the North Star* 1946

Symbols and myths

A flag is a primary symbol of national identity. The *only* coloured element in the *Ontario Readers* is the frontispiece, a flag with the words ‘One Flag, One Fleet, One Throne, The Union Jack’, later changed to ‘Our Flag’. Thus, from 1909 to 1936, every time children opened their readers they were reminded of their identity as British subjects. Throughout the twentieth century, several attempts were made to develop a unique Canadian flag, but these attempts were abandoned due to a lack of consensus.⁶⁵⁴ The Canadian Red Ensign, used as an unofficial national flag through much of the twentieth century, seldom appears in the readers and is certainly not

a dominant symbol of national identity; its absence may reflect the difficulty of drawing and explaining the flag to small children. There are no easily distinguishable images of the Union Jack or the Red Ensign in the readers used from 1937 to 1950.

In the 1950s and 1960s readers, the Union Jack appears only in a historic context, for example, raising the flag in the new land, frontispiece to the 1946 edition of *Under the North Star*, (Figure 7.1) and the units on the Commonwealth found in the *Canadian Reading Development* series. Although the Union Jack remained the official flag until 1965, it was no longer seen as representing Canada; a minuscule Red Ensign flutters over the Parliament Buildings in the frontispiece to *Riding with the Sun*. The absence of a flag as national symbol in the post-World War II readers seems to indicate a deliberate distancing from Britain as a part of an emerging Canadian identity. The 1960s readers were produced in the early years of nation-wide competitions for a new flag design culminating in the adoption of the Maple Leaf Flag in 1965. Astute educational publishers, aware that a new Canadian flag was likely to be adopted soon, would avoid having out-of-date imagery in their new reading series.

Another dominant symbol of national identity is the national anthem. ‘God Save the King,’ Canada's national anthem until the official adoption of ‘O Canada’ in 1980, is presented as the opening selection in the 1909 and 1923 *Second Reader* and the 1930s *Golden Windows*; it does not appear in the post-World War II readers. ‘O Canada’ is the introductory selection

⁶⁵⁴ Heritage and Canadian, "First 'Canadian Flags'".

in the 1930s *Gateways to Bookland*; in the 1950s and 1960s readers it is accorded the same status as other patriotic poems and songs sprinkled throughout the readers.

The difficulty in enforcing the flag and national anthem as symbols of national identity in the readers, especially those used after World War II, lies in the fact that the Union Jack and 'God Save the King' are unmistakably symbols of the British Empire. It would be difficult to create a uniquely Canadian identity using symbols so strongly identified with Britain, so the editors of the 1950s and 1960s readers simply minimised the use of these emblems. Likewise, while the 1930s *Treasury Readers* each include a portrait of the reigning monarch as the frontispiece, and *Gateways to Bookland* features the young Princess Elizabeth playing with her corgis, no similar illustrations appear in the readers used after 1950.

Whenever ten and eleven year-olds opened the *Third Reader* they were faced with the 'Empire Day' address which reminded them to be 'faithful' to their 'high British traditions' and 'the mission of your race' and the readers are replete with patriotic poems, intended to arouse nationalist feelings in children and influence how children thought of themselves as Canadians.⁶⁵⁵ Weber refers to the importance of *la patrie*, 'the fatherland', in constructing national identity in France. But despite numerous references to citizens as 'children' or 'sons', 'Canada', invariably feminized, is *never* directly referred to as 'the motherland'. The readers include numerous references to Canadian citizens as her 'children', the most noticeable being the poem, 'Canada's Child' which appears multiple times from 1937 to 1970: 'You are all Canada's children now.'⁶⁵⁶ Another example is 'O Canada!': 'True patriot love in all thy sons command.'⁶⁵⁷

As this study examines changes in national identity over time, it is worth noting that 'A Song for Canada' the chief patriotic poem in the *Ontario Readers*, used from 1909 to 1937, does not refer to Canada as 'mother' or Canadians as her 'children', while the poems appearing in readers after 1937 continually reference Canada's 'sons' and 'children'. One could infer that from the 1930s Canadians began to think of Canada as a 'mother', implying that she had grown up, in keeping with the popular notion that Canada 'came of age' with participation in the Great War.⁶⁵⁸ One could also infer that the preponderance of references to 'Canada's

⁶⁵⁵ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.p.vi.

⁶⁵⁶ *Golden Windows*.pp.284-85.

⁶⁵⁷ *Gateways to Bookland*.p.2.

⁶⁵⁸ I have not been able to find the origin of this 'coming-of-age' construction, which seems to be a product of late twentieth-century journalism.

children' in the readers used after World War II reflects a growing confidence in Canada as an 'adult' nation. Both of these inferences would be incorrect. First, *all* the patriotic poems in the readers date from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and express the sentiments of their times, with the exception of 'Under the North Star', which seems to have been written expressly for the 1958 revised edition of the eponymous reader, 'Our Fathers Came' which is identified as having been written to celebrate 'the first presentation of Canadian citizen certificates' in 1947', and 'Canada's Child'.⁶⁵⁹ Secondly, the increase in references to Canada's 'children' simply reflects the greater selection of readers, from a single book to a choice of six texts for each grade. Typically, between Grades Four to Six, a child would read—and, likely, memorise—a total of two or three patriotic poems; additionally some of the patriotic poems in the readers were set to music and taught as songs, depending upon the school's music programme.

Overall, while pupils from 1909 to 1970 learned to consider themselves 'children' of Canada, the idea of Canada as 'the motherland' was not a part of this teaching. The stronger identification was Canada as 'home': 'Our home and native land.'⁶⁶⁰ 'She' is frequently constructed as 'our birthplace', for example, in the refrain to the patriotic poem, 'There's a Thing We Love', which, like 'Canada's Child', appears across multiple readers after the 1930s: 'Tis our birthplace, Canada.'⁶⁶¹ The references to Canada as 'our birthplace' persist through the readers of the 1950s and 1960s, despite the increase in New Canadians who were born elsewhere. Not only were New Canadians expected to construct Canada as their 'birthplace', they were also expected to see themselves as 'Canada's children' and share 'our' British settler ancestors.

Other dominant images associated with Canada in popular culture include the maple leaf, the beaver and the Mountie. The maple leaf and maple tree are introduced as a symbols of Canada in the poem, 'The Maple', which appears in both editions of the *Third Reader*. This image is enforced with the small maple leaves embossed on the covers of the 1923/25 readers. The maple leaf is clearly positioned as a symbol of Canada in the 1930s *Gateways to Bookland* but is less dominant in later readers, with few appearances, either in text or illustrations. The beaver, referred to in 1950s readers as Canada's national animal and credited as the foundation of the fur trade, especially in the trading post stories of the 1960s, is constructed more as a

⁶⁵⁹ Dickie, *Teaching Reading Today - a Guide to Gay Adventurers*.p.142.

⁶⁶⁰ *Gateways to Bookland*.p.2.

⁶⁶¹ Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*.p.330.

commercial resource than a symbol. The beaver also appears simply as an animal rather than a symbol in selections on nature observation, stories about children taming animals and several anthropomorphised tales of Canadian wildlife. The Mountie does not feature in the readers used before 1950, appearing in the later readers primarily in a historical context as representatives of law-and-order in Western Canada, with a few present-day adventures set in the Arctic. Images of Mounties appear, guarding Ottawa's Parliament buildings and surrounded by children of many nationalities, but as these are not accompanied by text or referenced in the manuals, it is difficult to understand how they might have influenced children's ideas about Canada. Overall, while maple leaves, beavers and Mounties appear as scattered elements through the post-World War II readers, there is no overt attempt to deliberately enforce these images as symbols of Canada.

Stuart Hall emphasises the role of legends in constructing national identity.⁶⁶² British legends and traditional stories dominate the readers in use before 1950, enforcing the role of British imperial ethnicity in constructing Canadian identity. While pioneer stories are present in the readers from 1909, it is not until the 1950s that the myth of the pioneer is enforced as a part of Canadian identity, replacing the Arthurian legends and story of Dick Whittington. The myth of the pioneer is a part of the wilderness metanarrative of Canadian identity, identified by literary critics Frye and Atwood, among others. In the readers this takes the form of romanticised tales of the early British settlers in Canada, clearing forests, braving marauding animals and 'Indian attacks' to create homes in the wilderness. Pioneer mythology is common in British settler cultures; Jan McGennissen reviews the role of the male-dominated settler culture in constructing national identity in Australian school readers.⁶⁶³ The pioneer mythology of Canadian readers is very different, emphasising the role of strong women; while men clear land, cut trees and build log cabins, they are largely absent when disaster strikes, leaving their wives to deal with the situation. The British settler is ascribed the role of the common ancestor, positioned as the grandparent or great grandparent of *all* young Canadians, even those whose immigrant forebears settled in cities, thus raising the position of British settlers to mythical status. The myth of the pioneer remained a strong element in Canadian culture through the 1970s and 1980s, as evidenced by the CBC's highly popular oral history programme, 'Voice of the Pioneer'.

⁶⁶² Hall, "The Future of Identity."

⁶⁶³ McGennissen, "Huts in the Wilderness: Pioneering in School Readers."

In the 1960s readers, the pioneer persists as a dominant theme in Canadian identity, but as the remaining vestiges of British mythology are eliminated, the gap is filled by 'Indian legends'. 'Indian legends', especially extracts from Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*, appear in almost all the readers from 1909 but it is not until the 1960s that they are deliberately incorporated as a part of Canadian national identity. Sheila Egoff criticises the adoption of 'Indian legends' as representing English Canadian culture: 'Indigenous though they are to Canada, Indian legends are culturally "imported" and are no more native to Canadian children than an Ashanti lullaby.'⁶⁶⁴ While generally presented as 'authentic', the origin of many of these 'legends' is doubtful. Some are attributed to particular First Nations or set in specific regions of Canada, and those collected by folklorist Cyrus Macmillan have provenance as traditional oral tales, although he adapted them to the form of European fairy-tales. Others may be simply an author's inventions, written in what she imagines to be an 'Indian' style, especially those taken from existing folklore collections.⁶⁶⁵ Several teachers' manuals suggest that children try their hands at writing 'Indian legends' explaining natural phenomena or the characteristics of animals; this suggests that the Aboriginal myths in the readers are easy to imitate and not authentic.

The incorporation of Aboriginal mythology, spurious or otherwise, represents an attempt by the textbook editors to construct a distinct national culture acceptable to Canadians of non-British descent, a culture tied to the Canadian landscape, not Britain. It is also indicative of the trope of the Vanished Indian, discussed under *Inhabitants*, below. Because the First Nations are no longer present in Canada, their culture is available for use, ready to be adopted and adapted as required in constructing Canadian national identity.

Within the readers used before 1950, British Canadian identity is enforced through the symbols and legends associated with Britain: the flag, national anthem and legends. The lack of clear symbols of a distinctly Canadian identity is reflected in the 1950s and 1960s readers with minimal representation of flags and anthems, although numerous patriotic poems and songs construct Canada as 'our birthplace' and 'home'. British legends are replaced with pioneer mythology, which enforces the British settler identity while establishing the role of wilderness in constructions of Canadian identity. Aboriginal mythology is also incorporated

⁶⁶⁴ Egoff, *The Republic of Childhood: A Critical Guide to Canadian Children's Literature*. pp.23-24

⁶⁶⁵ For example, British author Rhoda Power and American Katharine Judson both published collections of Aboriginal myths and legends, some of which are included in the readers.

into English Canadian culture; because it is associated with Canadian landscape rather than British traditions it is seen as acceptable to Canadians of different ethnic origins.

Landscape

The readers reveal the unique role of the landscape in constructing Canadian national identity. As Cole Harris reminds us, 'English-speaking Canadians tend to explain themselves in terms of land and location.'⁶⁶⁶ The Canadian stories in the *Ontario Readers* are firmly set in the St Lawrence River area with no specific locations west of Niagara Falls or north of Algonquin Park, apart from a description of the unpopulated 'Barren Lands' in the 1909 *Third Reader*. The 1930s readers provide a wider view of Canada with identifiable locations in the Prairie Provinces and Northern Ontario, but there is little attempt to describe Canada as a whole. The majority of the selections in the readers used before 1950 with specific Canadian locations are set in the distant past, in the nineteenth century or earlier.

In contrast, the 1950s readers provide present-day journeys across Canada, similar to *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants (Le Tour)* referred to in the Introduction, where two boys travel around France visiting different regions and encountering their fellow citizens.⁶⁶⁷ Weber identifies the role of this schoolbook in forming children's ideas about their country, a tool which aided in constructing national identity through imagining the nation. Like *Le Tour*, the 1950s readers describe the Canadian landscape for children, not only the topographical features and landmarks, but also the principal activities associated with each region.

In the readers of the 1950s—and even more so in the 1960s—Canada is depicted as a series of six regions: the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairie Provinces, British Columbia and the Arctic, rather than ten provinces and two territories. This creates a regional view of the nation rather than a single cohesive state. While each of the 1950s series makes a systematic attempt to cover the five regions from sea to sea, the readers are dominated by the Canadian Shield landscape which represents the Laurentian view of Canada, as identified by Innis. The Laurentian theory supports an east-west axis of Canadian exploration, settlement and trade, rather than the Continentalist north-south affiliation with the United States.

⁶⁶⁶ Harris, "The Myth of the Land in Canadian Nationalism." p.239.

⁶⁶⁷ Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*.pp.334-35.

Canada's east-west development is established not only through historic tales of exploration and settlement but also the cross-Canada tours of the 1950s readers which almost invariably begin in the east and end in the west; this east-west movement is constructed as the customary or preferred way of thinking about Canada, with 'sea-to-sea' meaning from Atlantic to Pacific. In the 1960s readers, the east-west pattern is largely historical, with the North constructed as the site for present-day adventures, mirroring Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's view of 'a Canada of the North' as the future of the nation.⁶⁶⁸

In the readers before the 1960s, it is sometimes not clear if the Arctic and its inhabitants are truly a part of Canada. The North is a mysterious and remote place, even more distant from urban Canadian life than Africa or Asia. Its inhabitants are viewed through an anthropological lens and even the 1950s young Canadians do not visit the Arctic on their cross-country tours, with Arctic adventures restricted to heroic Inuit children constructing igloos in the face of a blizzard. This view changes in the 1960s readers where the Arctic is constructed as the prime site for wilderness adventure, tales of survival and the trading post stories which offer English Canadian children the opportunity to live in the Canadian wilderness and interact with both Inuit and First Nations. The wilderness location established in the readers is a hallmark of indigenous Canadian children's literature, a feature Sheila Egoff believes distinguishes it from other writing for young people. Edwards and Saltman report that, 'For Egoff, a true Canadian narrative was one in which the environment was given a central place.'⁶⁶⁹

The readers of the 1950s and 1960s include not only tales of the pioneers clearing the forests and 'taming' the wilderness, but also exciting accounts of road and railway construction, opening the wilderness for resource extraction. The dominant theme is the transformation of the wilderness into something useful and productive, either for agriculture or resource extraction. This changing view of wilderness represents a move from an Aboriginal hunter-gatherer society to the British settler agrarian society and then to modern society which requires raw materials and power for industry.

⁶⁶⁸ John Diefenbaker, "A New Vision,"

<http://www.canadahistory.com/sections/documents/Primeministers/diefenbaker/docs-thenorthernvision.htm>.

⁶⁶⁹ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.p.193.

With exception of a few notes on conserving animal habitat and the dangers of soil erosion in the teachers' manuals there is no particular awareness of or interest in environmental protection, certainly not from an ecological perspective. On the contrary, forests are to be cleared and the inhospitable wilderness transformed into useful productive farmland. In stories of logging, the resources must be safeguarded from forest fires caused by lightning or careless campers; the junior forest rangers and bush pilots are protecting the forest's commercial value, not its ecological or aesthetic importance.

Despite Canada being continually described as 'beautiful' and this beauty ascribed to the wilderness landscape, overall there is little interest in promoting a wilderness aesthetic. Both the factual selections about artists such as the Group of Seven and Emily Carr and the tales involving fictitious painters centre on the characters themselves rather than the landscapes they paint, with the wilderness simply a backdrop for the action. The illustrations enforce the wilderness environment as a background for the adventures of the inhabitants, human and animal, with only six illustrations in the 1950s and 1960s readers depicting an uninhabited landscape. The appreciation of nature, particularly the Canadian wilderness landscape, is generally restricted to poetry and the poetry section is typically the last unit in the reader with the choice of poems to be studied left to the individual teacher.

Overall, the approach to Canada's wilderness, especially in the readers used before 1960s, is modern and productive. The early settlers, although positioned as old-fashioned figures of the agrarian past were, in their day, constructing a modern world, as illustrated by the poem, 'The Axe of the Pioneer', repeated numerous times from the 1930s to the 1960s: "We build up nations—this my axe and I!"⁶⁷⁰ This contrasts with, and possibly outweighs, the antimodern view of wilderness as the health-giving peaceful site of recreation and relaxation, epitomised by the poem, 'A Canadian Camping Song' that appears in each generation of readers from 1909:

A white tent pitched by a glassy lake,
Well under a shady tree,
By the rippling rills from the grand old hills,
Is the summer home for me.⁶⁷¹

The readers of the 1950s and 1960s introduce several stories of camping and outdoor recreation, intentionally constructing the wilderness as an antidote to busy, unhealthy city life.

⁶⁷⁰ Pierce, *The Treasury Readers: Grade Five*.p.334.

⁶⁷¹ Ontario, *The Ontario Readers - Third Book*.p.65.

These opposing two constructions of wilderness—the forest to be made cleared for progress contrasting with the idyllic site for recreation—create unresolved tensions within the readers, which will be discussed further under Antimodernism, below.

Wilderness survival is considered one of the dominant metanarratives in twentieth century Canadian identity. The changing character of this wilderness is only evident when examining the readers as a whole, from 1909 to 1970. Over this time, the site of survival—the location of ‘wilderness’—gradually shifts from the southern forests to the treeless Arctic. In the pre-World War II readers, the survival theme is represented by British settler ancestors braving the inhospitable climate and savage inhabitants, both human and animal, to clear the dense forests adjacent to the St Lawrence River and carve homes in the wilderness; in the 1960s readers, young English Canadians and their Aboriginal friends show their courage battling the harsh Arctic environment. Over time, the wilderness is tamed and becomes ‘home’, and the original enemies—indigenous peoples and wild animals—become friends and allies, fellow adventurers.

Inhabitants

The principal elements contributing to national identity, as identified by Gellner, Breuilly, Anderson and Weber, include: a common culture, a common language and meanings, and recognition of other citizens. The readers establish this common culture and language and identify their fellow Canadians for children.

The common culture presented in the pre-World War II readers is staunchly British Canadian, moving to an English Canadian identity in the post-War readers. Throughout the readers, ‘Canadians’ are assumed to be of Anglo-Saxon descent and the readers are constructed through this lens. The traditional values and culture, and the common meanings are those of the Anglo-Saxon cultural elite of the day, and the educators and bureaucrats responsible for curriculum development.

The primary purpose of the readers is training in the common language—English. English is both the language of instruction and the language being taught, the ‘mother tongue’. The readers are designed for children who have mastered the mechanics of reading, the basic decoding skills, and are able to read independently. They are designed to increase vocabulary, improve reading comprehension, and promote reading for both pleasure and information, with

a view to enabling children to participate in the nation's economy. For Gellner, a requirement of modern industrial society is 'communication between strangers involving a sharing of explicit meaning, transmitted in a standard idiom and in writing when required.'⁶⁷² This is precisely the role of the readers, to improve children's reading comprehension, extend their vocabulary and teach them to express themselves 'in standard idiom'.

Within the readers, the shared language—English—and shared culture—British—are the hallmarks of Canadian citizenship; those who do not share these common elements—New Canadians, French Canadians and Aboriginal peoples—are constructed as Other. Although they live in the same state, they are not part of the nation, not '*Canadian-Canadians*' as described by Mackey.⁶⁷³ One of the prerequisites for transforming New Canadians into '*Canadian-Canadians*' is acquiring the common language—learning English—although it is never entirely clear if this is the only requirement. New Canadians are shown as anxious to learn English, and participate in English Canadian activities, especially sports, in order to be absorbed in mainstream Canadian culture, while retaining traditional folklore and crafts, 'gifts' they brought to Canada.

French Canadians (*never* referred to as Québécois) are precluded from being a part of the national identity constructed in the readers. They can never share 'our' common language and culture, although they evidently share Canadian geography and history, with French settlers and explorers appearing throughout the readers. As they predate the English in Canada, the French are not constructed as bringing gifts—or enriching mainstream Canadian society. There is no exchange between English and French Canadian cultures; because of the language difference, the French Canadian must always remain Other. There is no suggestion that the French might learn English or the English learn French.

Contemporary French Canadians are not constructed as a modern mobile people. While English Canadians travel back and forth across the country—and internationally—by train, plane and automobile, the French Canadian travels between the farmhouse and sugar bush by horse-drawn sleigh. While English Canadians, especially artists, visit Quebec, French Canadians are restricted not only to the province of Quebec but to their immediate rural surroundings. French Canada is portrayed almost exclusively as a rural agricultural society, with a strong emphasis on producing maple sugar, and also individual handicrafts such as

⁶⁷² Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.p.33.

⁶⁷³ Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*.p.19.

woodcarving and rug hooking, precisely the types of occupations Gellner characterises as typifying an agrarian pre-industrial society.

This construction of an archaic Quebec with quaint inhabitants is greatly at odds with the reality of twentieth-century French Canada. In the 1950s and 1960s, while the readers portrayed Quebec as a rural backwoods inhabited by *habitants*, Montreal vied with Toronto to be Canada's largest and most modern city. At that time, Montreal was the headquarters for Canadian finance; *Place Ville Marie*, the headquarters for the Royal Bank of Canada and tallest building in the Commonwealth at the time opened in 1962, five years before the Toronto-Dominion Centre. Montreal was the first Canadian urban centre served by a vast underground network of shops, services and transportation, positioned not only the hub for the nation's commerce but also a cosmopolitan centre for culture and design, the heart of the fashion industry as well as manufacturing. The glamorous bustling modern city with its stylish bilingual inhabitants must have been quite a shock for the thousands of Canadians who made the trip to Montreal in 1967 for the World's Fair, Expo 67, especially when contrasted with the antiquated Quebec they knew from their school readers.

Because French Canadians within the readers are not a modern people and do not share the common language—English—and common heritage—British—they are not seen as participating in and contributing to the modern industrial nation that is Canada. Unlike New Canadians, who can integrate into Canadian society by learning English (and participating in sport), French Canadians are side-lined, caught in an agrarian past and constructed as figures of fun, through the inclusion of *habitant* poems and humorous stories.

The First Nations and Inuit, representatives of ancient hunter-gatherer societies, are acknowledged as indigenous inhabitants of Canada: 'Only the Indians and Eskimos lived in Canada before the forefathers of the rest of our people came from other countries across the sea.'⁶⁷⁴ While French Canadians are constructed as present in the twentieth century Canada, although caught in a perpetual agrarian time-warp, in the readers up to the 1960s, 'Indians' are simply not present in Canada of the day, while 'Eskimos' are remote and exotic Others, living in igloos and hunting seals. On an official visit to Yellowknife in 2005, former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson stated:

As an immigrant child growing up in Canada, I went to public schools. The tendency was to romanticize the Indians, as we all called them then. We made little tepees out of pieces of birch bark that we gathered, and we talked about

⁶⁷⁴ Dickie, *Gay Adventurers*.p.x.

how Indians hunted and fished and lived a certain way of life. There was a reserve 40 miles from Ottawa, but none of us ever met an Indian. They were spoken of as though they were a disappeared people. Same thing with the Inuit—we made igloos out of grapefruit halves with white paste over them, and people in furs going into them. Nowhere was the idea that these people lived still, hunted still, that many still led a nomadic life. Nothing made them feel real or contemporary to us, and we're still suffering from that problem.⁶⁷⁵

Born in 1939, Clarkson was likely in Grade Five or Six when the four new reading series were introduced for the 1950/51 school year; she describes precisely the attitudes and activities suggested in those readers and their predecessors, and states that her ideas about Canada's peoples were constructed entirely by her Ottawa public school experience.⁶⁷⁶ Clarkson's speech emphasises the presentation of the First Nations within school texts as a 'disappeared people', the 'Vanishing Indian' referred to by Francis.⁶⁷⁷ This notion of a 'disappeared people' is enforced by the poem 'Indian Children' which appears multiple times in each generation of readers from 1937 to 1970.

Although constructed as a 'disappeared' people throughout the pre-World War II and 1950s readers, contemporary First Nations join the Inuit as active participants in the survival and trading post stories of the 1960s readers, where they are seen interacting with English Canadians. However, their presence is almost entirely restricted to the North, the land of antimodern romantic adventure far distant from urban Canadians' real lives, with no place in the modern industrial nation that is Canada. Because the First Nations are not present in present-day Canada, their culture is available to be used by English Canadians in constructing national identity, as discussed under Symbols, above.⁶⁷⁸

In summary, the British Canadian identity of the pre-World War II readers is succeeded by an English Canadian identity in the post-War readers. The editors make a deliberate effort to create a distinct Canadian identity and cultural heritage, while retaining British ancestry and ties to the Commonwealth. Yet, as we have seen, this particular version of Canadian identity does not include French Canadians or Aboriginal peoples.

⁶⁷⁵ Adrienne Clarkson, "Speech on the Occasion of the Third Northern Research Forum Open Meeting," <http://archive.gg.ca/media/doc.asp?lang=e&DocID=4259>.

⁶⁷⁶ Clarkson, a 'New Canadian' refugee from Hong Kong became a *Canadian*-Canadian, and, as the Queen's representative in Canada, an emblem of British imperial ethnicity.

⁶⁷⁷ Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*.pp.16-43.

⁶⁷⁸ See also *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History*.pp.128-51.

Within the readers, the stories of British settlers create a common history and shared ancestry, effectively the 'narration of the nation', which can be shared by New Canadians, but not French Canadians or Aboriginal peoples.⁶⁷⁹ While French Canadians have similar pioneer ancestors, they do not share 'our' common language and culture, while Canada's indigenous peoples are not connected in any way to British settlers or their descendants and cannot share their identity.

The term 'multiculturalism' is not used within the readers, but the concept is introduced in the 1930s readers with 'Canada's Child' and present throughout the readers of the 1950s and 1960s as an identifying element of twentieth century Canadian national identity. It is clear that participation in the multicultural society constructed within the readers includes English Canadians and recent immigrants but precludes French Canadians and indigenous peoples.

'Canadians' are the Anglo-Saxon descendants of the early British settlers, as recent immigrants who have learned English and adapted themselves to English Canadian culture. French Canadians and Aboriginal peoples are not part of the construction of Canadian national identity within the readers, except as Others to confirm English Canadian identity, although First Nations mythology has been incorporated into Canadian national culture.

Antimodernism in Canadian identity

In the Introduction I examined Michael Apple's views on the hegemonic nature of state education, particularly the promotion of the traditional values of the 'opinion makers', the educators and bureaucrats controlling the curriculum, comparing this to Lears' writing on the antimodernist movement in the face of urbanisation and industrialisation, reflecting the essential distrust of modern industrial society by the North American cultural elite. I also touched on Sharon Wall's exploration of antimodernism at Ontario summer camps during the same period as the textbooks of this study.

Antimodernism is reflected in the readers primarily through the lack of urban settings and occupations within the selections. This might be expected in the early *Ontario Readers*, although even by 1909 over half the population of the province lived in urban locations.⁶⁸⁰ The

⁶⁷⁹ Hall, "The Future of Identity."

⁶⁸⁰ Canada, "Population Urban and Rural, by Province and Territory (Ontario)."

last readers in this study were published in 1961-62, by which time seventy percent of the population of Canada lived in urban settings (seventy-seven percent in Ontario), yet the readers include almost no distinctively Canadian selections in identifiable Canadian urban settings.⁶⁸¹ Similarly, in 1961 only fourteen percent of Canadians were engaged in agriculture and 'other primary industries', with over half the population employed in manufacturing and service industries, yet there is almost no representation of modern Canadian industry in the readers.⁶⁸² Even the selections on science and invention tend towards resource extraction, for example, the discovery of uranium rather than its processing and scientific use.

This anti-urban attitude represents a distinct bias on the part of the editors towards an antimodern view of Canada, very much at odds with the reality of Canadian society of the day. Canadian children, especially those growing up in the 1950s and 1960s were presented with a decided preference for rural and wilderness settings, a sharp contrast to their own homes in 'unhealthy' urban environments, and resource-based occupations far removed from the manufacturing and service industries which occupied over half their parents. There is no real suggestion that children might aspire to future careers in Canada's cities and the 1960s units on 'science' attempt to capture children's interests with futuristic space adventures rather than the medical discoveries and inventions in earlier readers.

Gellner writes of the role of state education in preparing young people for modern industrial society, exchanging ideas rather than simply 'moving material'. And yet it is precisely the 'moving materials' occupations that are privileged, not only in the pre-World War II *Ontario* and *Treasury Readers* but especially in the 1950s readers; even the readers of the 1960s emphasise resource-based and manual occupations, with forest rangers and bush pilots presented as the ideal role model. Although the bush pilot is competent with modern technology, he also relies on the traditional survival skills of the explorers and Aboriginal peoples. Very few role models representing professions requiring post-secondary education are presented, despite the rapid growth in these institutions following World War II.⁶⁸³

While from 1909 to the 1960s, Canada is continually referred to in the patriotic selections as a 'young' nation, with a bright future, each series of readers expresses a noticeable nostalgia, a longing for simpler earlier times, while romanticising the exploits of

⁶⁸¹ "Population, Urban and Rural, by Province and Territory," ed. Statistics Canada.

⁶⁸² "Percentage Distribution of the Employed by Industrial Group 1946 and 1956 to 1965".

⁶⁸³ The growth in post-secondary institutions is documented by Wilson, Stamp, and Audet, *Canadian Education: A History.*, Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976.*

the settler ancestors: 'Do you think we are missing some of the fun of pioneer living'.⁶⁸⁴ Children are encouraged, not only to play at being pioneers but also to take on the identity of the romantic and 'primitive' First Nations, through plays, crafts, and other immersive activities. This is precisely the form of antimodernism that Wall describes in Ontario's summer camps of the same period.

The readers used before 1950 include very few selections set in present-day Canada, and with the exceptions of the cross-country tours where children are introduced to their peers in other parts of the country, many Canadian selections in the readers of the 1950s are set in the nineteenth century or earlier. While the 1960s readers are more contemporary in style, focusing on the concerns of present-day Canadian children, these stories are almost all located well away from the city, in rural or wilderness environments. The family farm with its endless backbreaking toil present in the pre-1960s readers is abandoned for the romance of the Canadian wilderness and the trading post.

The preponderance of wilderness adventures and trading post stories, especially as settings for 'coming of age' stories in the 1960s readers, as well as stories about settlers carving homes in the wilderness, suggests a decided preference for these antimodern settings on the part of the editors, teachers and publishers working in a urban environment. Overall, the contents of the readers seem to reflect the traditional values described by Apple, the longing for a simpler life described by Lears and the escape from urban life for the healthy outdoor life described by Walls.

Writing about the wilderness theme dominant in Canadian children's literature, Edwards and Saltman, describe precisely the antimodernism found in the school readers:

At the same time, Romantic ideas about the unspoiled and innocent nature of childhood, and a persistent strain of agrarian idealism in Canadian political discourse, have intertwined with the idea of wilderness as pastoral, unspoiled, and natural, locating a particularly idealized image of Canadian childhood within an environment from which urban settlement has been erased.⁶⁸⁵

The contrast between this idealised antimodern wilderness as the site of recreation and adventure and the 'useful' wilderness as the site for resource extraction and development to serve the needs of a modern industrial society creates unresolved tensions within the readers.

⁶⁸⁴ Noble and Fisher, *Teacher's Manual for under the North Star*.p.131.

⁶⁸⁵ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing*.p.193.

Earlier I cited a key finding of the *Living and Learning Report*: 'Curriculum should no longer emphasize traditional values and ensure social stability, but should prepare youngsters to cope with the accelerated rate of social change expected in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first centuries.'⁶⁸⁶ As a result of the report, the existing reading series, which stressed precisely those antimodern 'traditional values' were discontinued. Not only were the readers pedagogically out-of-date, their denial of city life was unrealistic in 1971 when 82% of the population of Ontario lived in urban areas, and their antimodern sentiments were unsuitable for constructing national identity in the modern late twentieth century Canada.⁶⁸⁷

While the readers' romantic recreations of Canada's early days and present-day wilderness adventures in the North may be considered antimodern fantasies, we should remember that the primary purpose of the readers for Grades Four to Six was to improve children's reading comprehension and technical readings skills, to encourage children to read for both information and pleasure, and to create confident readers with the literacy skills essential for Gellner's modern industrial society. And for Gellner, as for Anderson, this ability to communicate, to be part of an educated mobile society, is key to national identity. By interesting children in reading, albeit through stories which construct Canada in a distinctly antimodern light, the readers technically fulfilled the goal of literacy, thus preparing children for their part in modern Canadian society.

Contributions

In the Introduction, I reviewed the scholarship on the role of state education in constructing national identity, and cited Weber's example of the storybook, *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants*, as a tool for constructing French national identity in the classroom. Like *Le Tour*, the school readers used in Ontario from 1909 to 1970 helped children to imagine their nation. As Weber's example demonstrates, the 'nation' cannot be imagined simply through maps or even artwork; it needs stories to bring it to life, not only to imagine the physical geography but also to imagine oneself as a part of the community that is the nation. For Canadian children, lacking Canadian storybooks and before the days of widespread television, these readers would be their primary means of imagining their country.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁶ Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*.p.217.

⁶⁸⁷ StatsCan

⁶⁸⁸ See Egoff, *The Republic of Childhood: A Critical Guide to Canadian Children's Literature.*, Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing.*

The use of the readers in the classroom is precisely the synchronous activity described by Anderson, with each pupil participating in an imagined community of children all experiencing communal act of reading the same materials at the same time across the country. But it is not simply the ritual of sharing the same media that allows children to imagine themselves as part of the nation. The readers also construct the imaginary community that is Canada, in precisely the same way that Weber's example of *Le Tour* constructed an imaginary version of *La France* for nineteenth and early twentieth-century French schoolchildren. The nation's geography, its inhabitants and their customs become familiar, a common mythology is adopted and common meanings constructed.

The reader is the artefact of the process of imagining the nation, of creating national identity in the classroom. As *Le Tour* presented an 'official' version of France sanctioned by the state education system, the Canadian national identity constructed for children through the readers is the preferred version of English Canada's educators and bureaucrats, the 'official knowledge', traditions and values the nation's opinion makers wanted to transmit to future generations. Unlike Weber's example of a single storybook that constructed France in precisely the same way for generations of children, the readers used in public schools in Ontario changed considerably over the twentieth century, reflecting the emergence of a distinct English Canadian identity.

The principal contribution of this thesis is the recognition of the school readers and accompanying teachers' manuals as a valuable but largely untapped resource for scholarship on Canadian national identity. The reader was the *earliest* source of constructions of national identity for Canadian children, introduced several years before formal instruction in history and geography, and, unlike history texts, the reader provided children with child-centred present-day accounts of their country. The Canadian scholars cited in this thesis who were educated in Canada's public schools before the mid-1970s likely received their earliest impressions of Canadian national identity through the readers in this study.

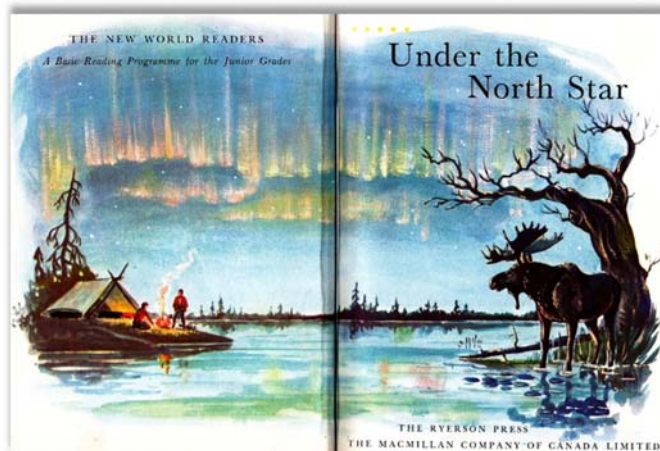
While others cited throughout this work, including Francis, Igartua, Bumsted and Granatstein, have recognised the role of textbooks in constructing Canadian national identity or, as demonstrated by von Heyking, regional identity, they have focused on history books, especially high school texts, as the primary source for this identity. Literary critic Margaret Atwood refers to several selections from school readers which influenced her ideas about the

Canadian wilderness; again these are included in readers for older children, not Grades Four to Six, and she does not consider the readers themselves as complete texts. Overall, the readers in this study are a largely neglected resource for research in Canadian identity studies. This thesis also contributes to international scholarship on the role of state education and educational materials in constructing national identity, as well as more general studies of identity in education. This work informs the active and growing field of Canadian educational history, particularly curriculum studies, and also studies of Canadian children's literature; for many Canadian children before the late 1960s, the readers would be their earliest and possibly *only* exposure to Canadian writers and illustrators.

Finally, this thesis adds to understandings of antimodernism in Canadian culture, a subject generally associated with the fine arts, particularly the Group of Seven, and the craft traditions of the Maritime Provinces, but also recognized by Sharon Wall as an influence on mid-twentieth century Canadian culture, particularly in Ontario, through the youth camps. The antimodern constructions of Canadian identity within the readers support Wall's theory but also suggest that the phenomenon was more pervasive, with a national influence beyond the Ontario summer camp experience.

I attended elementary school in Ontario during the 1950s and 1960s. The readers examined in this thesis were responsible for my earliest ideas about Canada and my identity as a Canadian. Like the French children reading about their nation in *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants*, I toured Canada in my imagination, from 'sea to sea', visiting children 'just like me' across the country. These children shared a common language, common culture and common ancestors; I was 'at home' in their communities and could survive with the best of

the Aboriginal children in the Canadian wilderness. While my ideas about Canada—and my fellow Canadians—changed over time, the Canada imagined through the readers remains at the core of my identity as Canadian.



7.2 Frontispiece *Under the North Star* 1958

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